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CANADIAN AWARENESS PROJECT REPORT

Summary

June, 1981



Minister's Advisory Committee
for the
Canadian Awareness Project

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THE CANADIAN AWARENESS PROJECT

Summary Report

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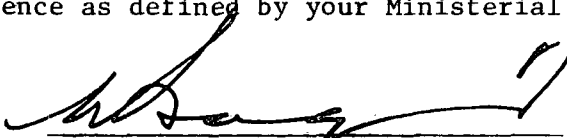
A Condensation of the Report of the Minister's Advisory
Committee for the Canadian Awareness Project

Funded and Administered Through the Planning and
Research Branch, Alberta Education


June 1981

With pleasure, we the undersigned, at Edmonton, Alberta, this twenty-seventh day of May, 1981, present to the Honorable David King, Minister of Education, the enclosed report, entitled "The Canadian Awareness Project."


We declare to the best of our ability and knowledge, the report meets the terms of reference as defined by your Ministerial Order dated May 12, 1980.


William J. Bagnall

Jamesie Bower



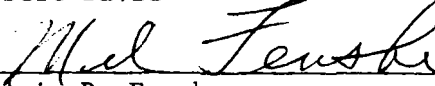
George Bevan



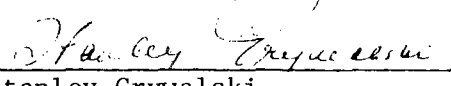
Ronald G. Dahl



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Peter G. Horcica



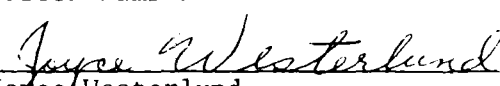
Valerie Johnson



Colin Thomson



Doreen Wambeke



Joyce Westerlund

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Frank Crowther, Associate Director, Curriculum Branch, Alberta Education
(served from August, 1980)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Minister's Advisory Committee for the Canadian Awareness Project acknowledges the efforts and willing cooperation of the many people who contributed to this project. Thanks go to the many teachers who met during the summer and fall of 1980 in a number of centers in the province in order to develop the first drafts of test items. Gratitude is extended to those students and teachers in Alberta who so willingly gave of their time to participate in the field test trials and in the final test administration. We also wish to give special recognition for the valuable contribution of members of the Technical Committee, consultants of the Planning and Research Branch, the project staff and the clerical staff for successfully carrying out their assignments in order to meet the rather severe constraints of time established for completion of the project.

Thanks and appreciation are extended to all of those who contributed their energy and talents so freely in order to bring the project to a conclusion under the terms set by the Minister of Education.

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PART 1

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Origin and Purpose of the Study

Speaking in the Alberta Legislative Assembly on April 10, 1980, the Honourable David King, Minister of Education, announced that a sample of Alberta students would be tested on their "knowledge about Canadian History, Geography and Citizenship." A further comment in the Minister's statement at that time served to illustrate the purpose of the Canadian Awareness Project:

Today, Albertans are increasingly aware that knowledge begins with knowledge of ourselves. To understand others, which is increasingly important in our world, we need to understand our own origins.

Mr. King indicated that the test(s) would "not be based on current curriculum or instruction." He stated, "It is intended as a pre-instructional test and it is expected to assist in assessing appropriate instruction and content, for the future."

The Ministerial Order, dated May 12, 1980, made provision for appointment of a Minister's Advisory Committee for the Canadian Awareness Project. The Advisory Committee was charged with "the development and analysis of an assessment of general knowledge and understanding of Canadian (including specifically Albertan) history, geography and citizenship demonstrated by a sample of elementary, junior and senior high school students in provincially funded schools, and ...[advising] the Minister of the results of this assessment." At all stages in the project the Advisory Committee assumed responsibility for, and was actively involved in activities such as the following: outlining the content to be tested (the test blueprint); selecting, revising and developing test items; reviewing and revising test booklets; interpreting the results and developing conclusions and recommendations.

Appointments to the Advisory Committee were made by the Minister with representation from citizens-at-large, education stakeholder groups, labour and industry (as noted on p. i). The Technical Advisory Committee was also appointed and a project staff employed to assist the Advisory Committee in fulfilling its mandate.

Summary of Project Procedures

Summary descriptions of the six phases outlining the activities associated with the Canadian Awareness Project are presented in Figure 1. Phase 1 represents the activities which preceded the involvement of the Advisory Committee; namely, the decision by the Minister of Education to initiate the project, development of the terms of reference, selection of the members of the Advisory Committee and the Technical Committee, and the employment of staff. Phase 2 shows the development, with successive revision, of the content outlines in the three subject areas (the test blueprints). Phase 3 shows the sequence of events involving the generation of items by teachers and the Advisory Committee development of an item pool and the selection of items by the Committee for the field tests. Phase 4 focusses on field testing, scoring and analysis of field test items, deletion/revision of items and selection of items for final tests. Phase 5 represents the preparation of test booklets, printing, collating, distribution, administration of tests, processing of returns, scoring and analyzing the final test results. Phase 6 depicts the tabulation of results, Advisory Committee's reviews, interpretations and recommendations, the preparation of the final report and its presentation to the Minister of Education.

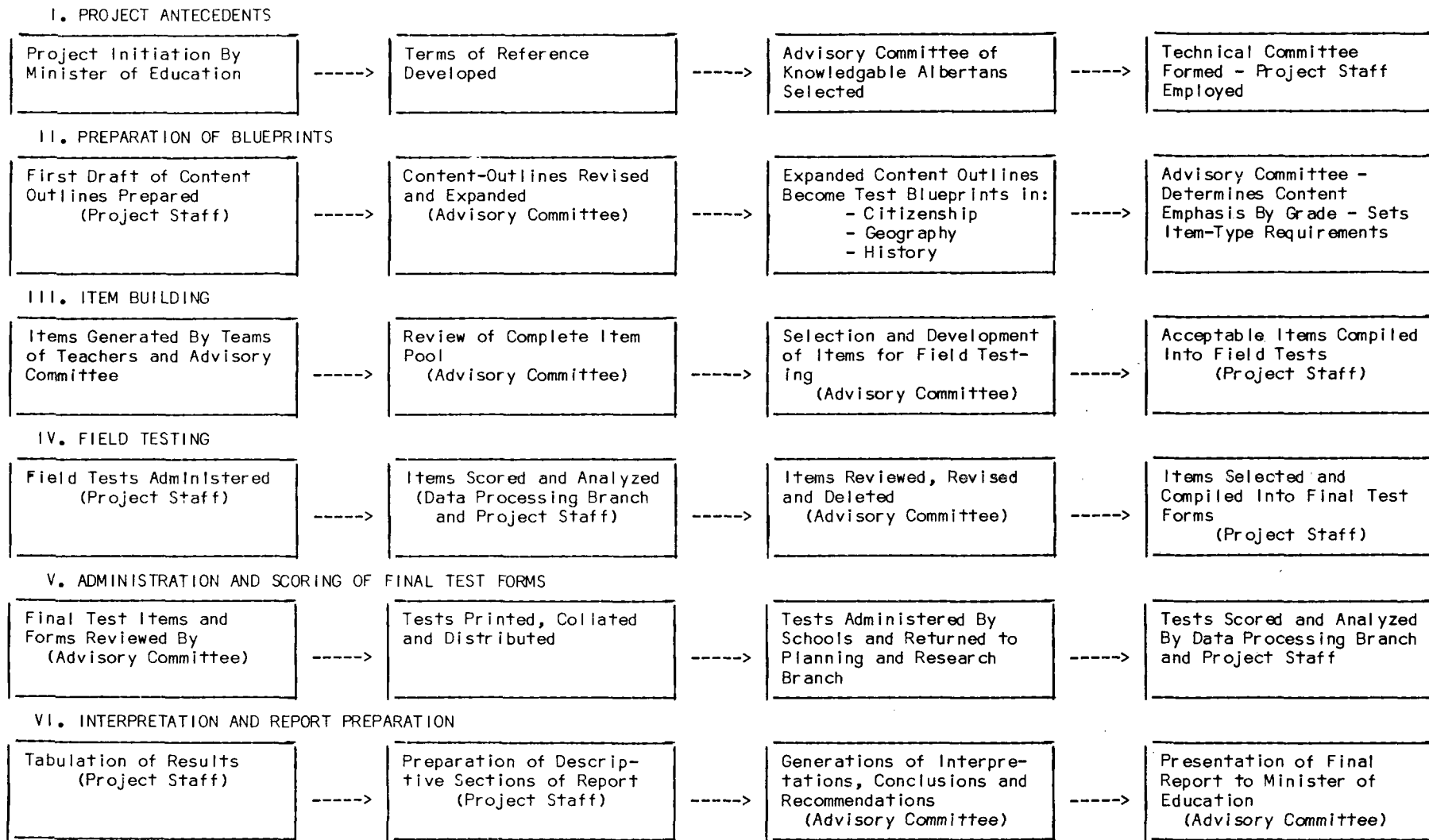
A description of some aspects of test development and the composition of the final tests is provided in Table 1. Over 5,500 test items (questions) developed by teacher groups and the Advisory Committee were entered in the computerized file at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT). After selections and revisions by the Advisory Committee 2,125 of these were field tested in 58 schools. Subsequent reviews and revisions by the Advisory Committee resulted in the selection of 1,402 items for inclusion in the final tests in the following numbers: citizenship, 405; geography, 511; and history, 486.

Table 1--Development and Retention of Test Items

Area	Grade	Number of Items		
		Entered in SAIT Bank	Field- Tested	Selected for Final Tests
Citizenship	6	434	129	126
	9	376	181	145
	12	473	212	134
Total		1,283	522	405
Geography	6	971	298	213
	9	483	193	175
	12	344	136	123
Total		1,798	627	511
History	6	710	226	110
	9	907	401	195
	12	807	349	181
Total		2,424	976	486
Grand Total		5,505	2,125	1,402

Figure 1

The Canadian Awareness Project Testing Program Flowchart



PART 2

SUMMARIES OF RESULTS

Overall Achievement by Content Area for Each Grade

What percentages of the sample of Alberta students in grades 6, 9 and 12 answered correctly the questions administered in each content area, i.e., in citizenship, geography and history? To answer this question the percentages of students tested who responded correctly to each item were averaged over all the items in each content area. The global results for each of citizenship, geography and history are recorded in Table 2. The Minister's Advisory Committee used this tabulation as a general indication of students' overall levels of knowledge and awareness in the three content areas. The median values noted in the table are the points which divide students into two equal groups, i.e., the point above and below which 50 per cent of the students performed.

Table 2*

Overall Achievement by Content Area: Medians of
Percentages of Students Answering Correctly

Content Area	Medians (Mid-Points of Distribution of Percentages of Students Responding Correctly)		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Citizenship	34	39	49
Geography	51	55	59
History	39	40	39

* Note: For convenience, the results for all three grades are noted in a single table. However, the reader is cautioned not to make comparisons between grades since different items are frequently used in each grade and the proportions of multiple choice, matching and completion types of questions also differ. In a later section of the report "all level" results will be reported which are based on the performance of students on items which were common to two or three grades. The all level (across grade) results permit defensible comparisons between and among grades.

Table 2 indicates that the median percentages of students answering questions correctly are as follows for grade 6, 9 and 12 respectively: Geography--51, 55 and 59 per cent; Citizenship--34, 39 and 49 per cent; and History--39, 40 and 39 per cent.

Within grades, several patterns of performance are evident in Table 2: 1) students at all three grade levels demonstrated relatively higher levels of knowledge about geography than either citizenship or history; 2) for grades 6 and 9 the differences between citizenship and history are not significant, and 3) the grade 12 level in citizenship is significantly higher than for history.

Table 3 provides summary statistics (mean, median and range) which describe general performance in each content area by grade. The percentage of students who responded correctly to items are reported as follows: mean--the average; median--the mid-point of the distribution of percentages of students answering correctly; and the range--the interval bounded by the highest and lowest percentages.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics of Overall Results

Content Area	Descriptive Statistic	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Citizenship	Mean	38	41	45
	Median	34	39	49
	Range	1-84	1-83	2-95
Geography	Mean	52	54	61
	Median	51	55	59
	Range	8-96	10-96	9-100
History	Mean	41	42	41
	Median	39	40	39
	Range	10-87	1-97	9-94

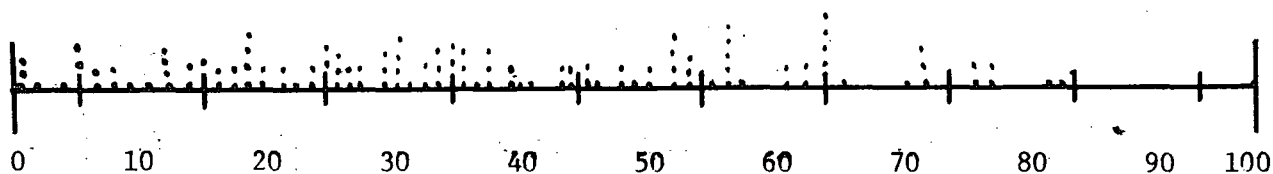
Table 4 provides a graphic representation of the foregoing results with each dot recording the percentage of students succeeding on a single item.

Table 4

Summaries of Group Averages For Objectives and Completion Items by
Content Area and Grade: Mean, Median and Range

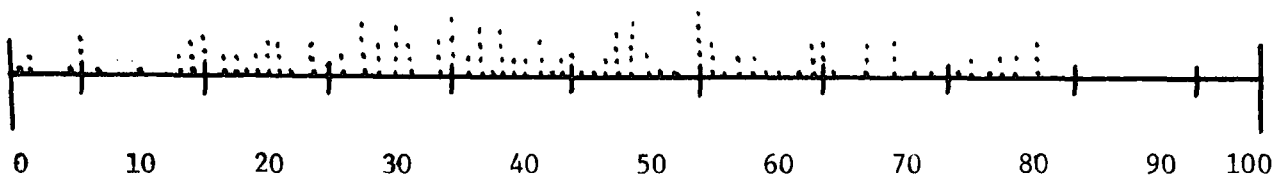
Citizenship - Grade 6

Mean: 38
Median: 34
Range: 1-84



Citizenship - Grade 9

Mean: 42
Median: 39
Range: 1-83



Citizenship - Grade 12

Mean: 45
Median: 49
Range: 2-95

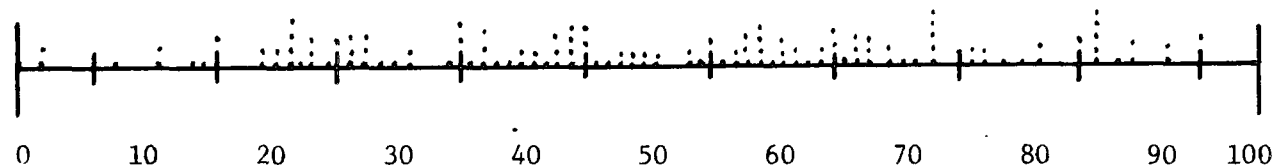
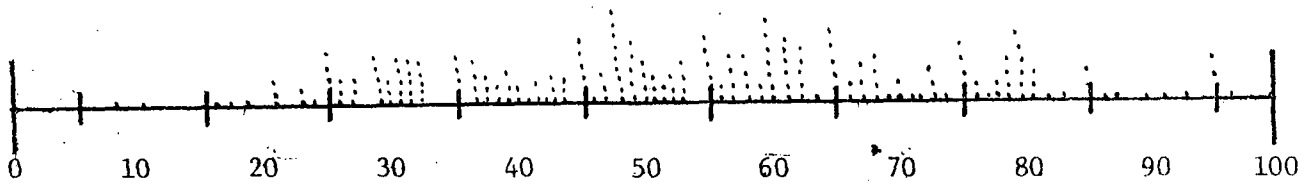


Table 4 (Cont'd)

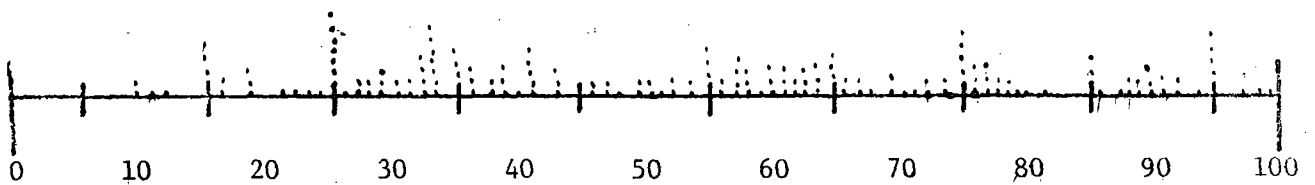
Geography - Grade 6

Mean: 52
Median: 51
Range: 8-96



Geography - Grade 9

Mean: 54
Median: 55
Range: 10-96



Geography - Grade 12

Mean: 61
Median: 59
Range: 9-100

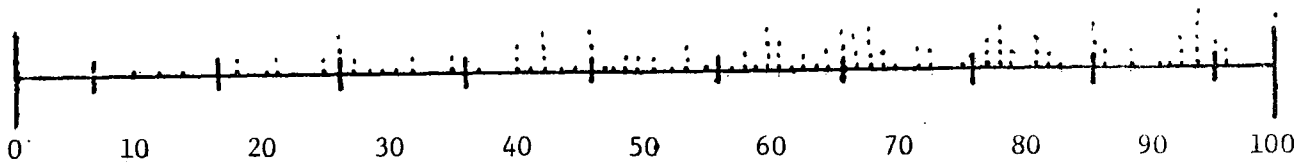
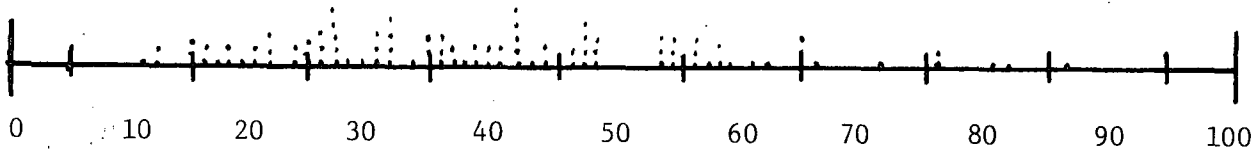


Table 4 (Cont'd)

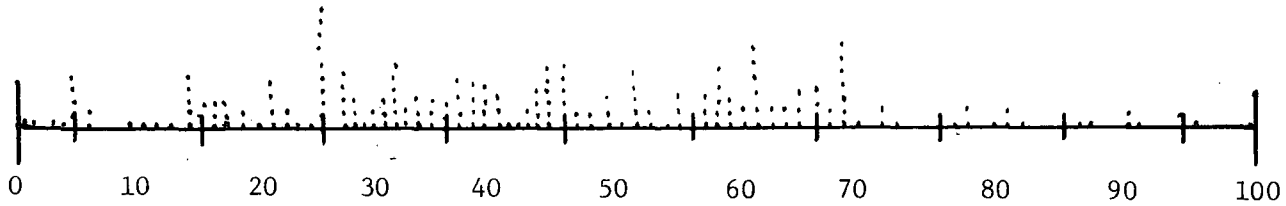
History - Grade 6

Mean: 41
Median: 39
Range: 10-87



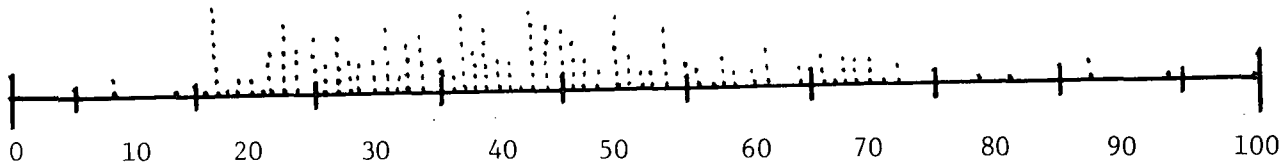
History - Grade 9

Mean: 42
Median: 40
Range: 1-97



History - Grade 12

Mean: 41
Median: 39
Range: 9-94



Summaries of Results in More Specific Detail

Tables 5 to 13 provide a graphic representation of results for each numbered content category within each content area. Once again, each dot represents the percentage of students succeeding on a single item.

Overall performances on individual content modules for each content area are presented by grade in Tables 5 to 13. Results from Table 4 are further broken down according to grade and content modules within the three content areas. Each content module is represented by a line graph which provides information on the percentage of students correctly answering the objective items contained in the module. The range and median of these items is displayed visually on the graphs (medians have been joined).

In most of the line graphs the range of correctly answered items was quite large. This indicates that students found some difficult, easy and average items within most content areas.

The following modules contain a significant number of items which students found to be difficult; that is, items which fewer than 30 per cent of the students were able to answer correctly.

Grade 6 - Citizenship: Basic Terms and Concepts, Canadian Parliamentary System, Provincial Legislative System, and Municipal Government, Adequacy of the Canadian Political System; **Geography:** Structure and Relief, Cultural Groups; **History:** Inhabitants and Settlers, Social-Economic Development, Political Development.

Grade 9 - Citizenship: Principles of Representative Government, Canadian Parliamentary System, Provincial Legislative System, Adequacy of the Canadian Political System; **Geography:** Manufacturing; **History:** Inhabitants and Settlers, Social-Economic Development, Political Development, Canada in World Affairs, Appendix.

Grade 12 - Citizenship: Canadian Parliamentary System, Provincial Legislative System, Adequacy of the Canadian Political System; **Geography:** Mining, Manufacturing; **History:** Discovery and Exploration, Inhabitants and Settlers, Social-Economic Development, Political Development.

The following modules contain a large proportion of items which students found to be easy, that is, items which over 70 per cent of the students were able to answer correctly.

Grade 6 - Geography: Size and Boundaries of Canada, Settlement Patterns.

Grade 9 - Citizenship: Principles of Representative Government; **Geography:** Location, Size, and Boundaries of Canada; **History:** Appendix.

Grade 12 - Citizenship: Basic Terms and Concepts, Principles of Representative Democracy, Global Issues; **Geography:** Boundaries of Canada, Size of Alberta, Structure and Relief, Settlement Patterns.

Table 5

Grade 6 Citizenship Summaries of Results:
Medians (Mid-Points) and Ranges of Group
Averages According to Content Module

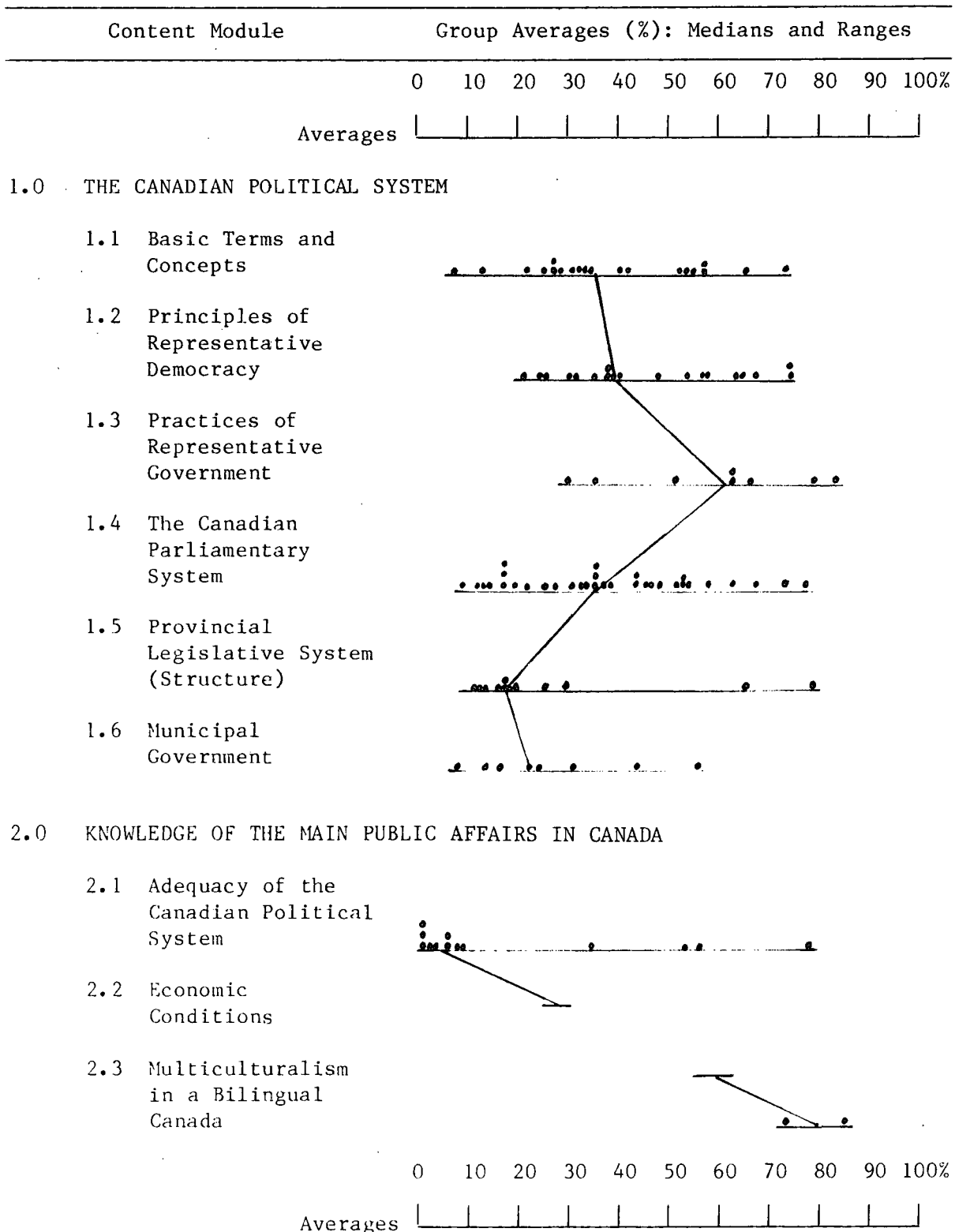


Table 5 (Cont'd)

Grade 6 Citizenship Summaries of Results

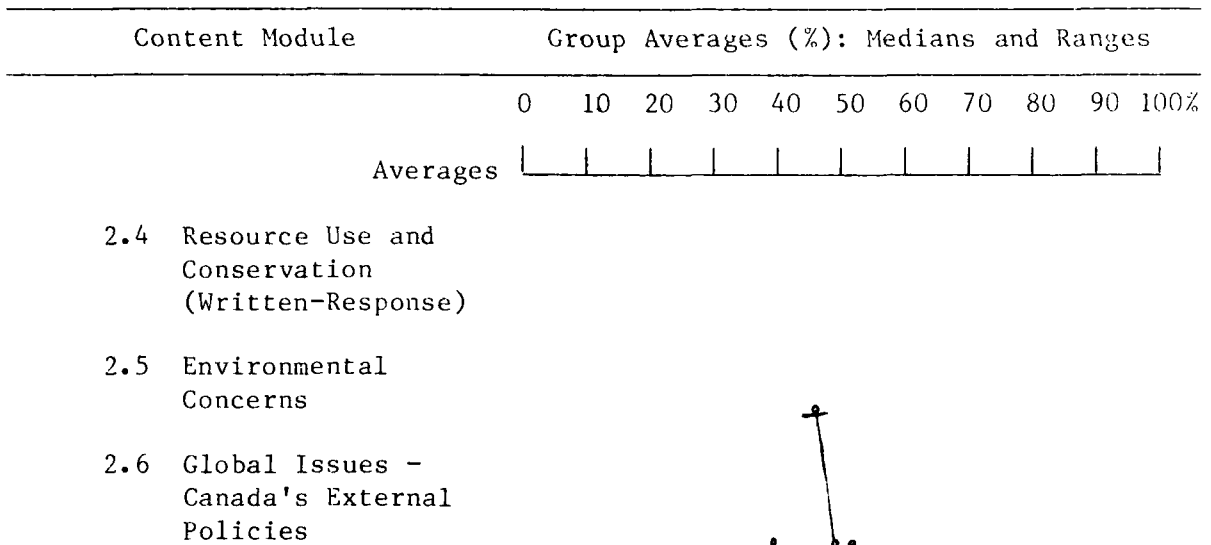


Table 6

Grade 6 Geography Summaries of Results: Medians (Mid-Points) and Ranges of Group Averages According to Content Module

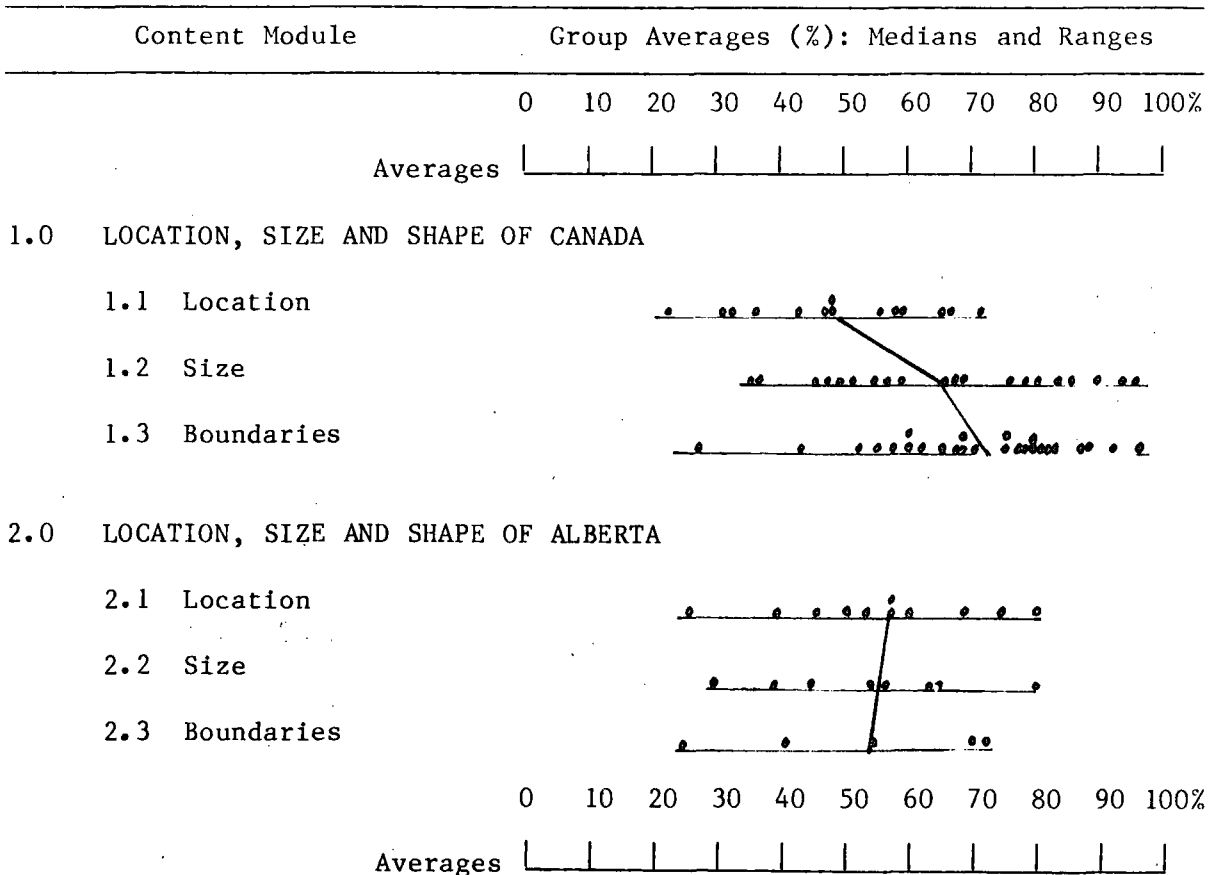


Table 6 (Cont'd)

Grade 6 Geography Summaries of Results

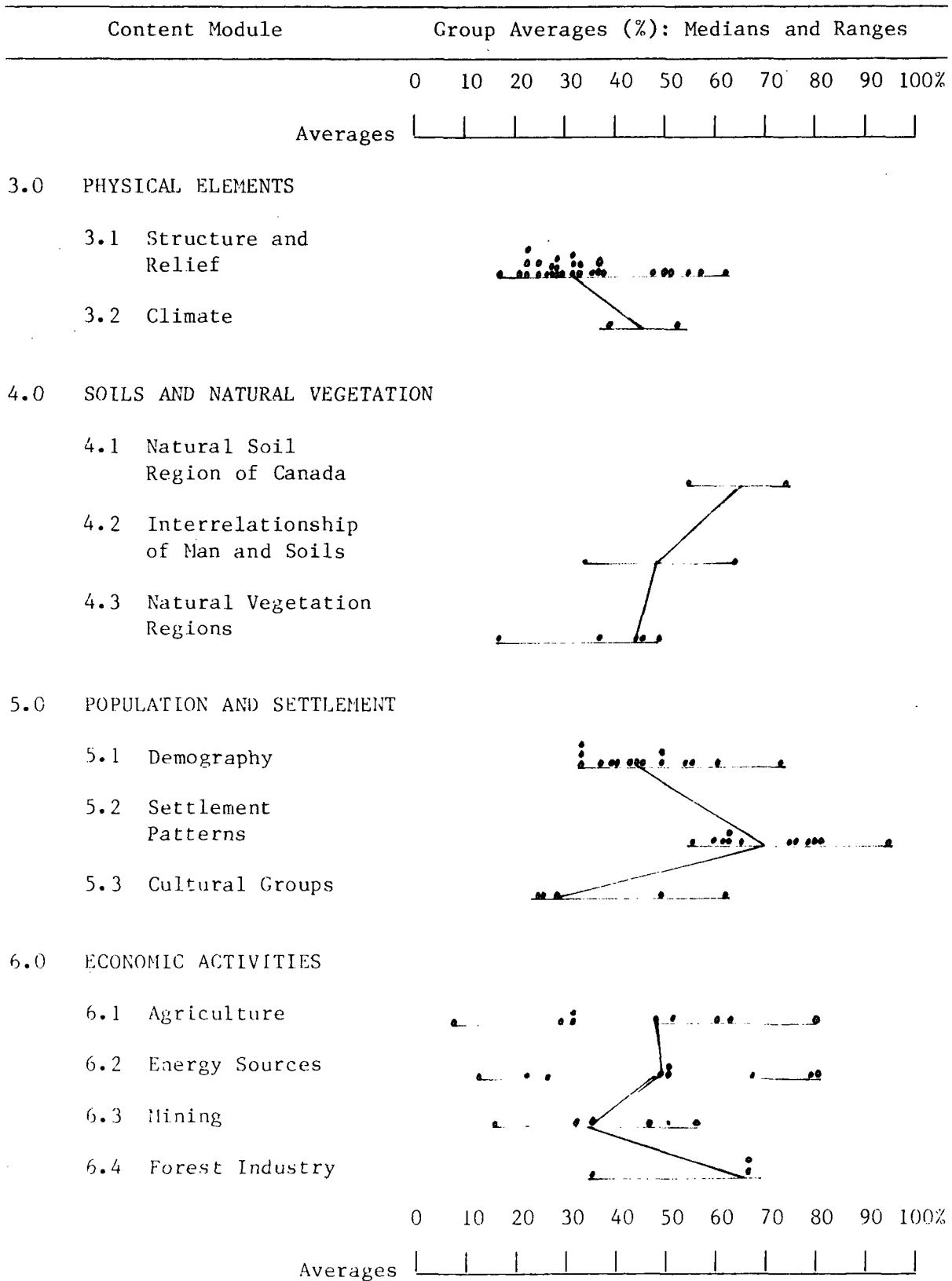


Table 6 (Cont'd)

Grade 6 Geography Summaries of Results

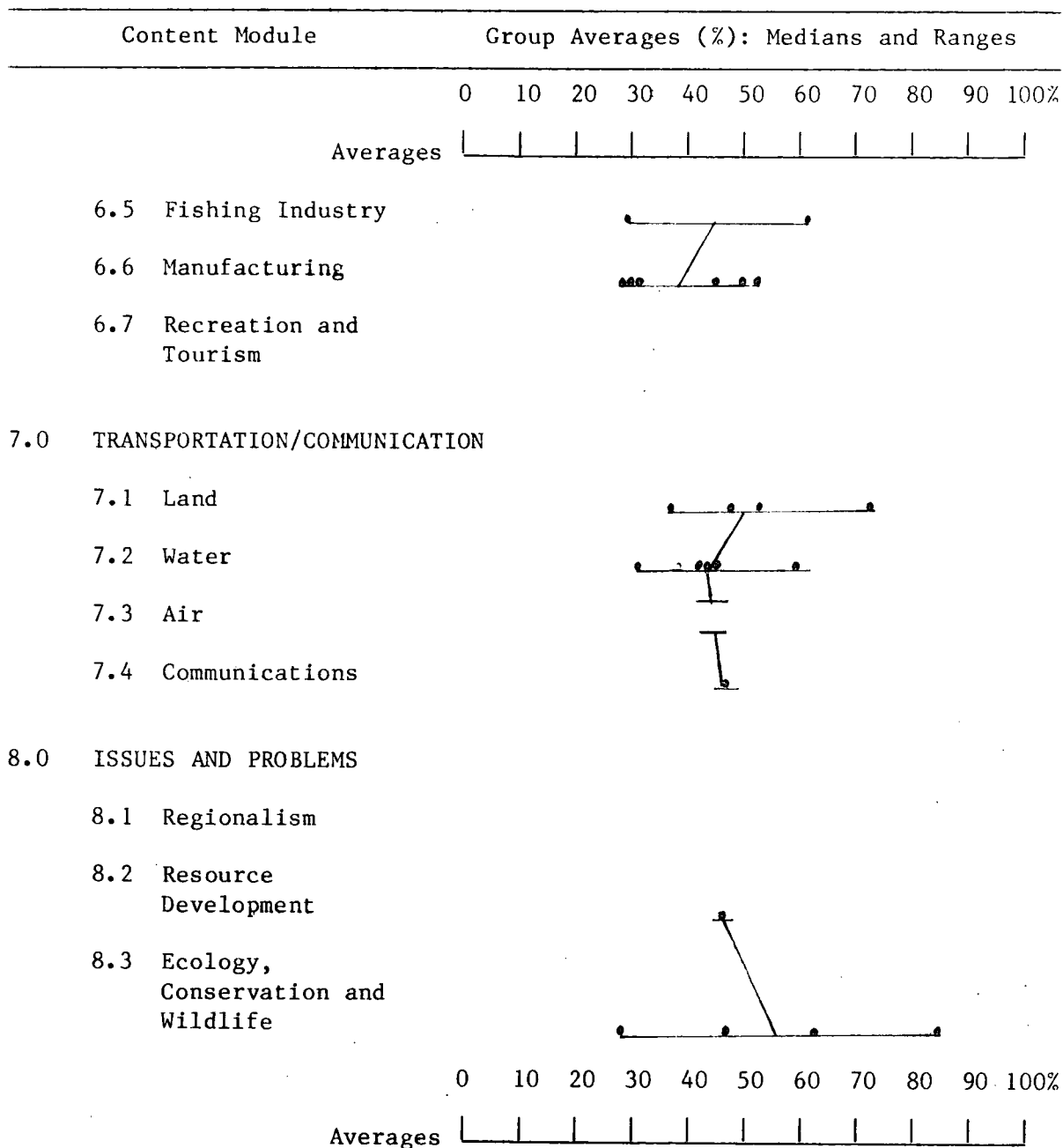


Table 7

Grade 6 History Summaries of Results: Medians
(Mid-Points) and Ranges of Group Averages
According to Content Module

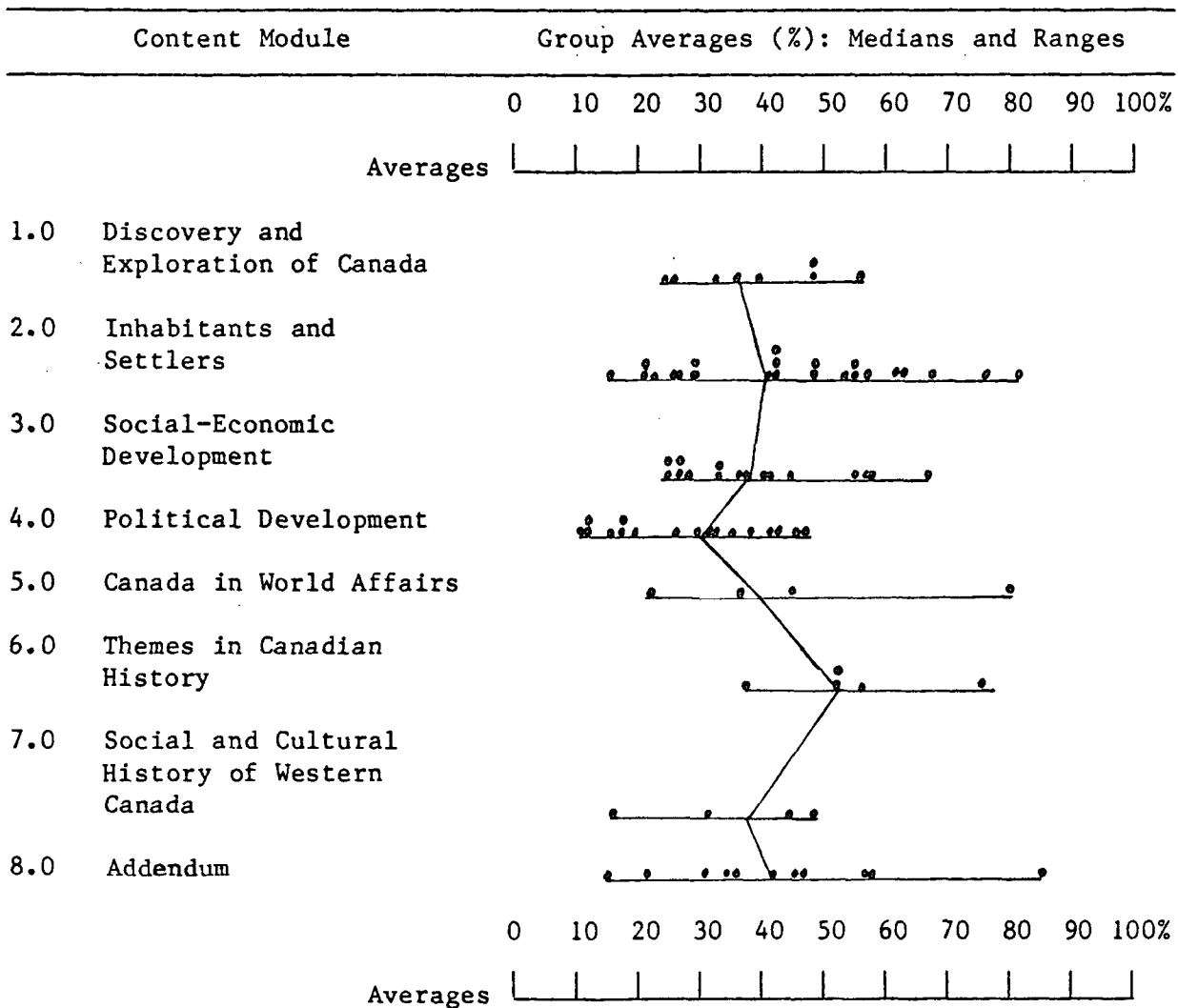


Table 8

Grade 9 Citizenship Summaries of Results:
Medians (Mid-Points) and Ranges of Group
Averages According to Content Module

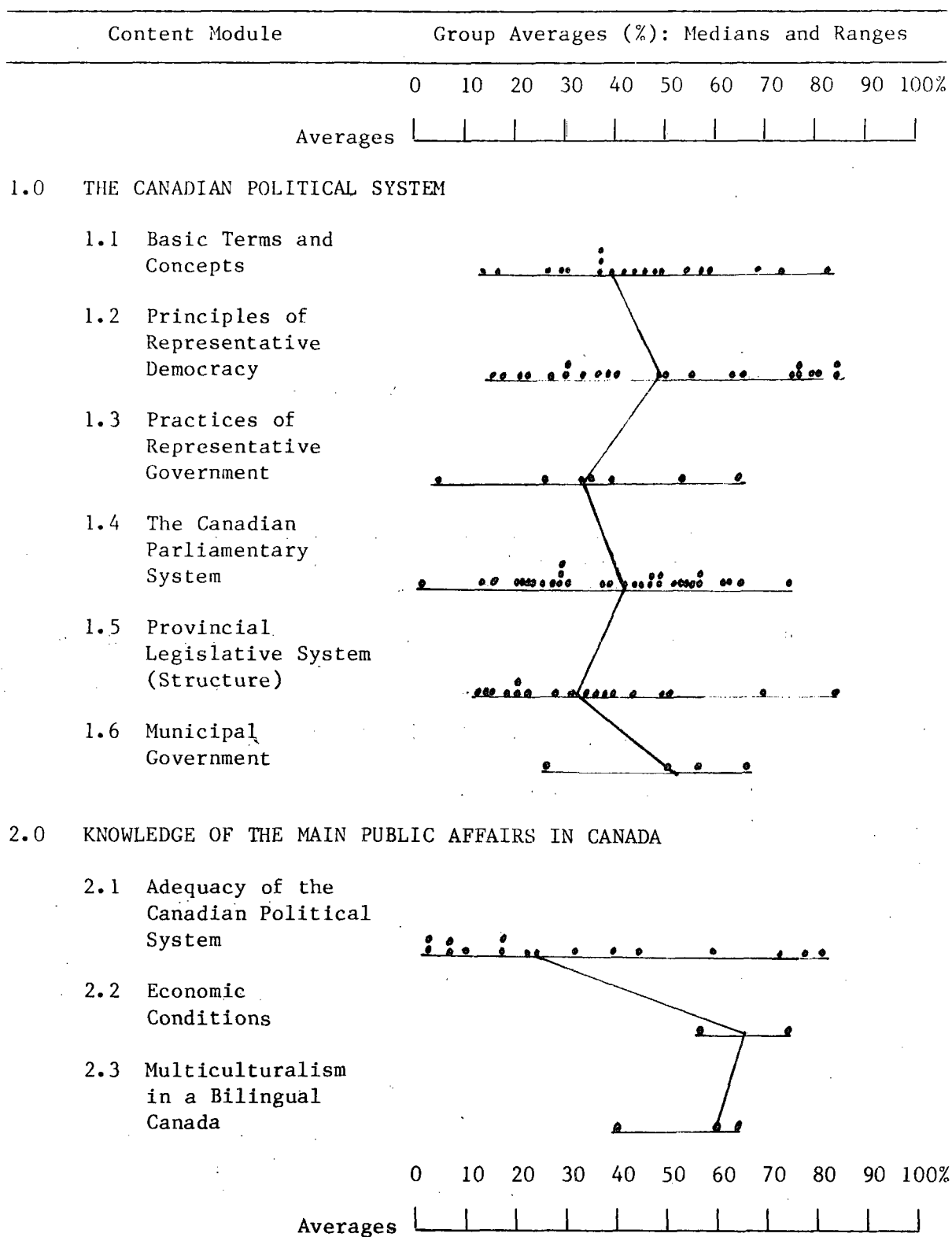


Table 8 (Cont'd)

Grade 9 Citizenship Summaries of Results

Content Module	Group Averages (%): Medians and Ranges										
	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100%
Averages											
2.4 Resource Use and Conservation (Written-Response)											
2.5 Environmental Concerns											
2.6 Global Issues - Canada's External Policies											

Table 9

Grade 9 Geography Summaries of Results: Medians (Mid-Points) and Ranges of Group Averages According to Content Module

Content Module		Group Averages (%): Medians and Ranges											
		0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100%	
Averages													
1.0	LOCATION, SIZE AND SHAPE OF CANADA												
1.1	Location												
1.2	Size												
1.3	Boundaries												
2.0	LOCATION, SIZE AND SHAPE OF ALBERTA												
2.1	Location												
2.2	Size												
2.3	Boundaries												
Averages													

Table 9 (Cont'd)

Grade 9 Geography Summaries of Results

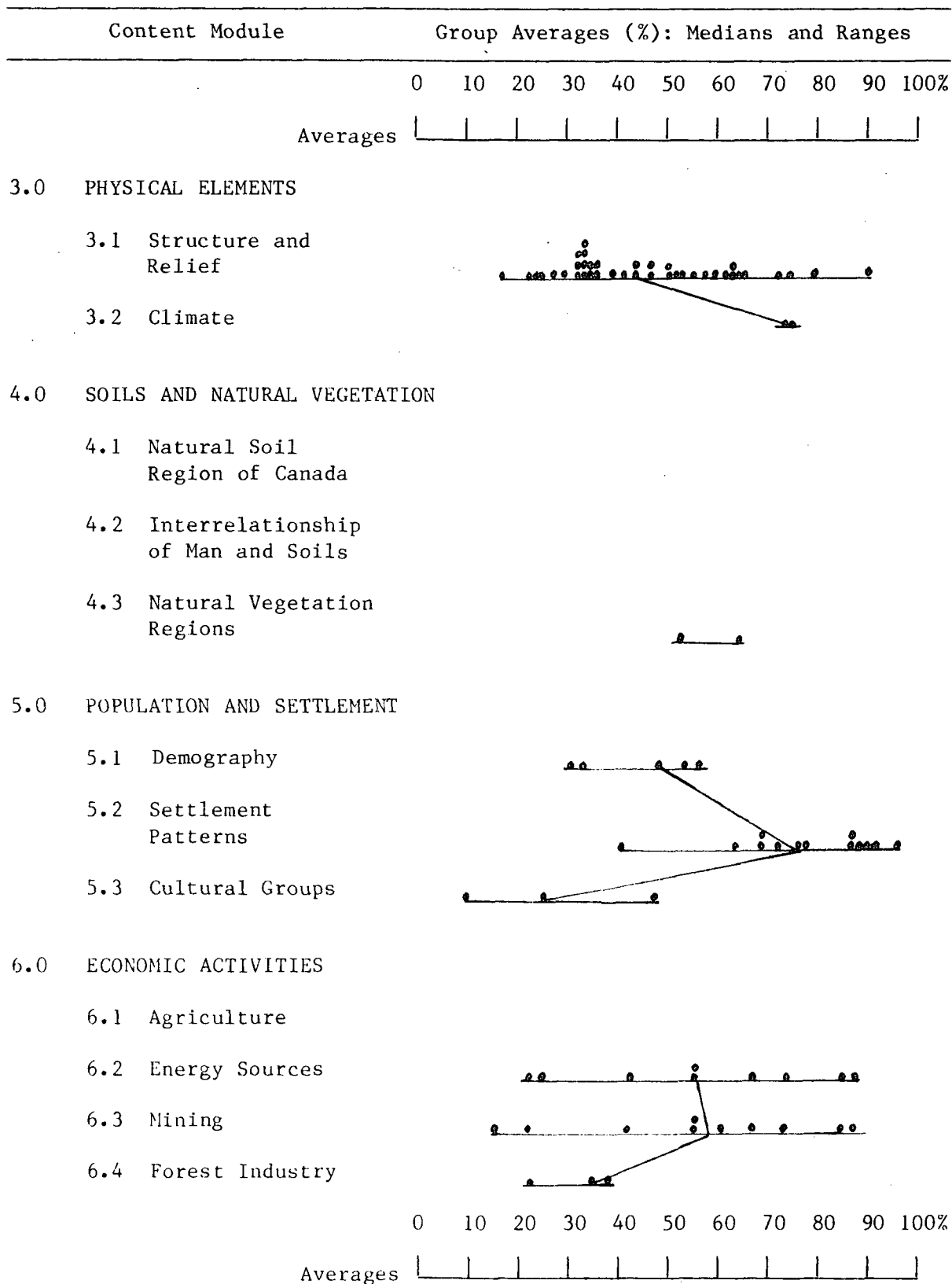


Table 9 (Cont'd)

Grade 9 Geography Summaries of Results

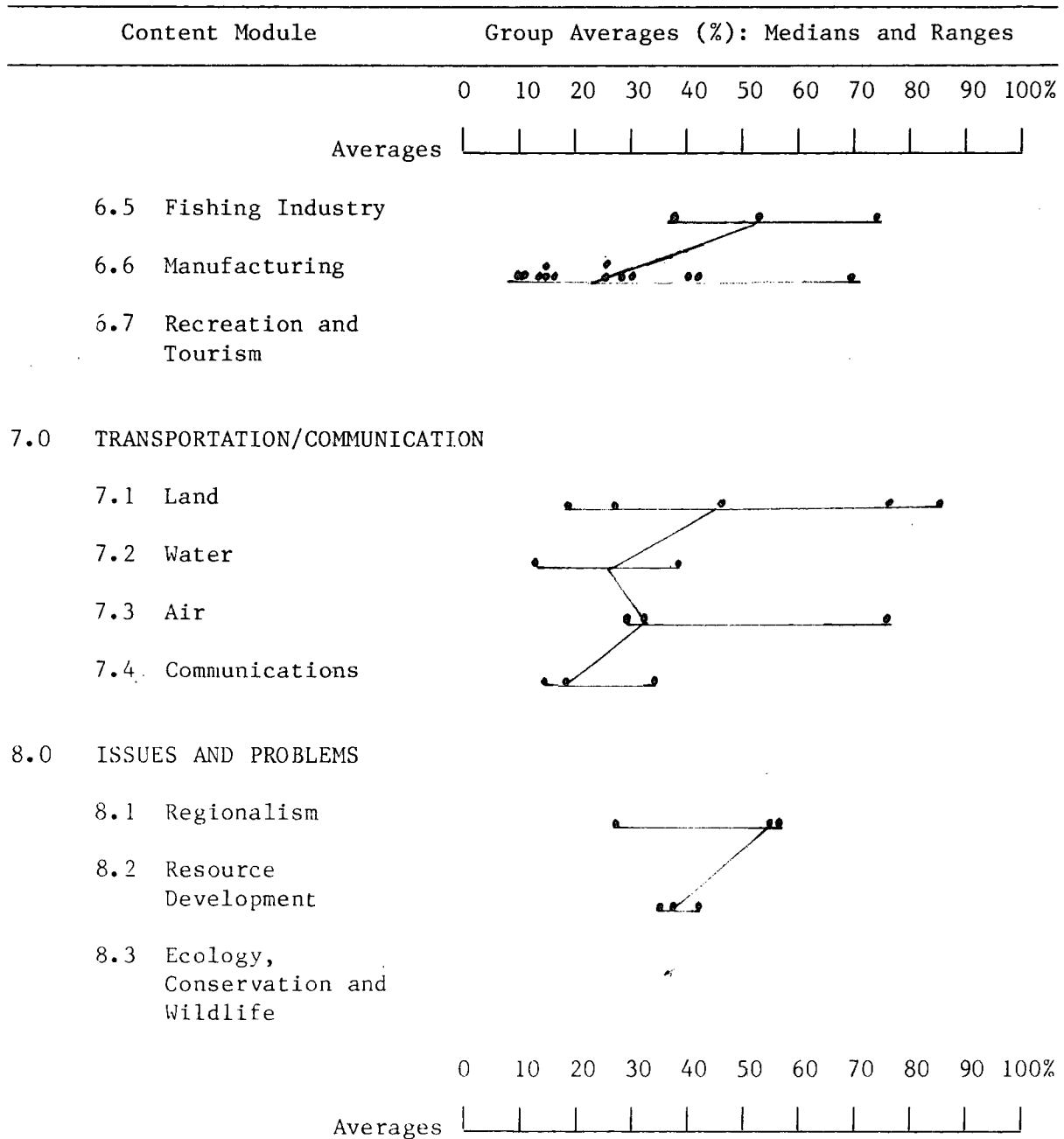


Table 10

Grade 9 History Summaries of Results: Medians
(Mid-Points) and Ranges of Group Averages
According to Content Module

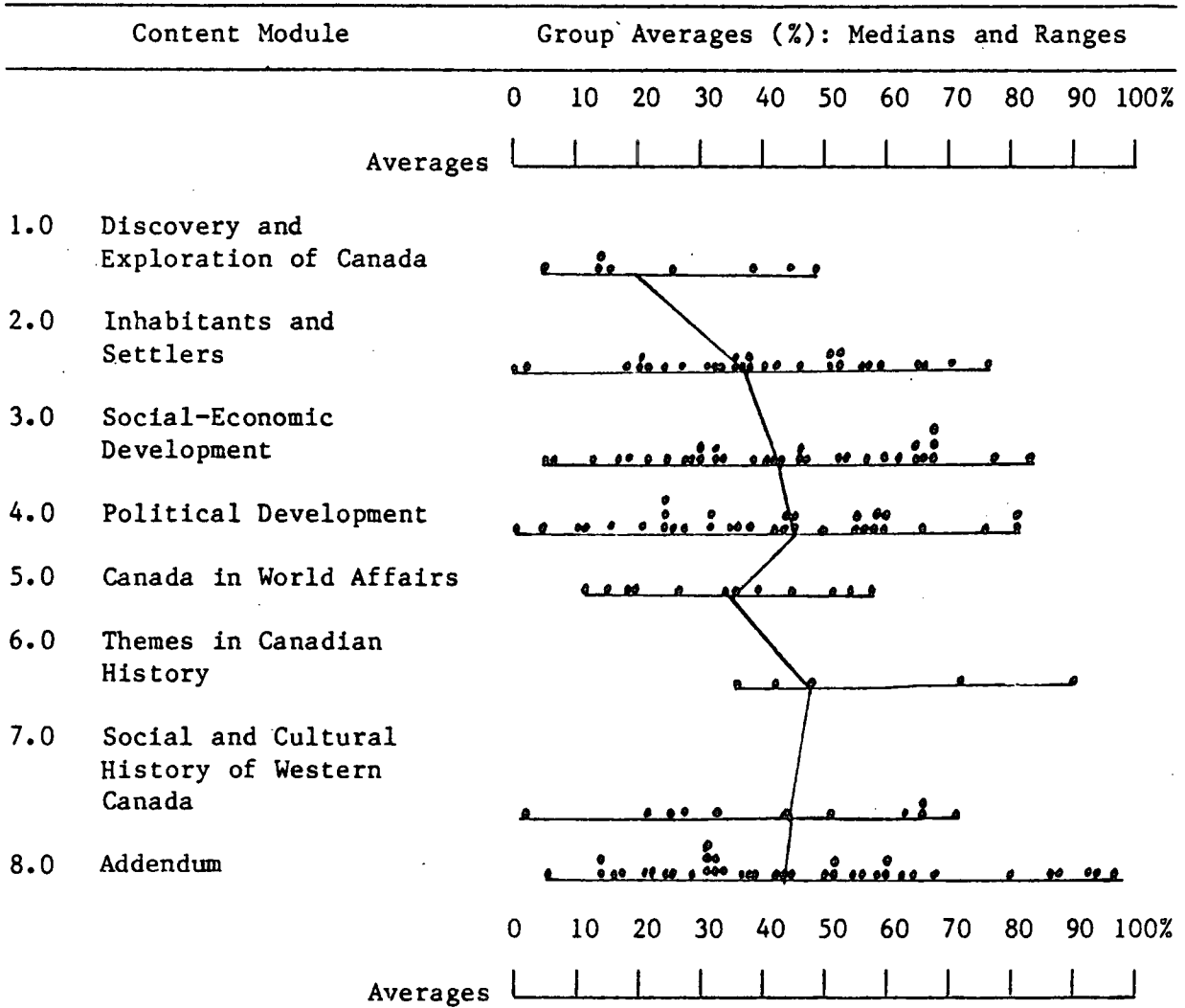


Table 11

Grade 12 Citizenship Summaries of Results:
Medians (Mid-Points) and Ranges of Group
Averages According to Content Module

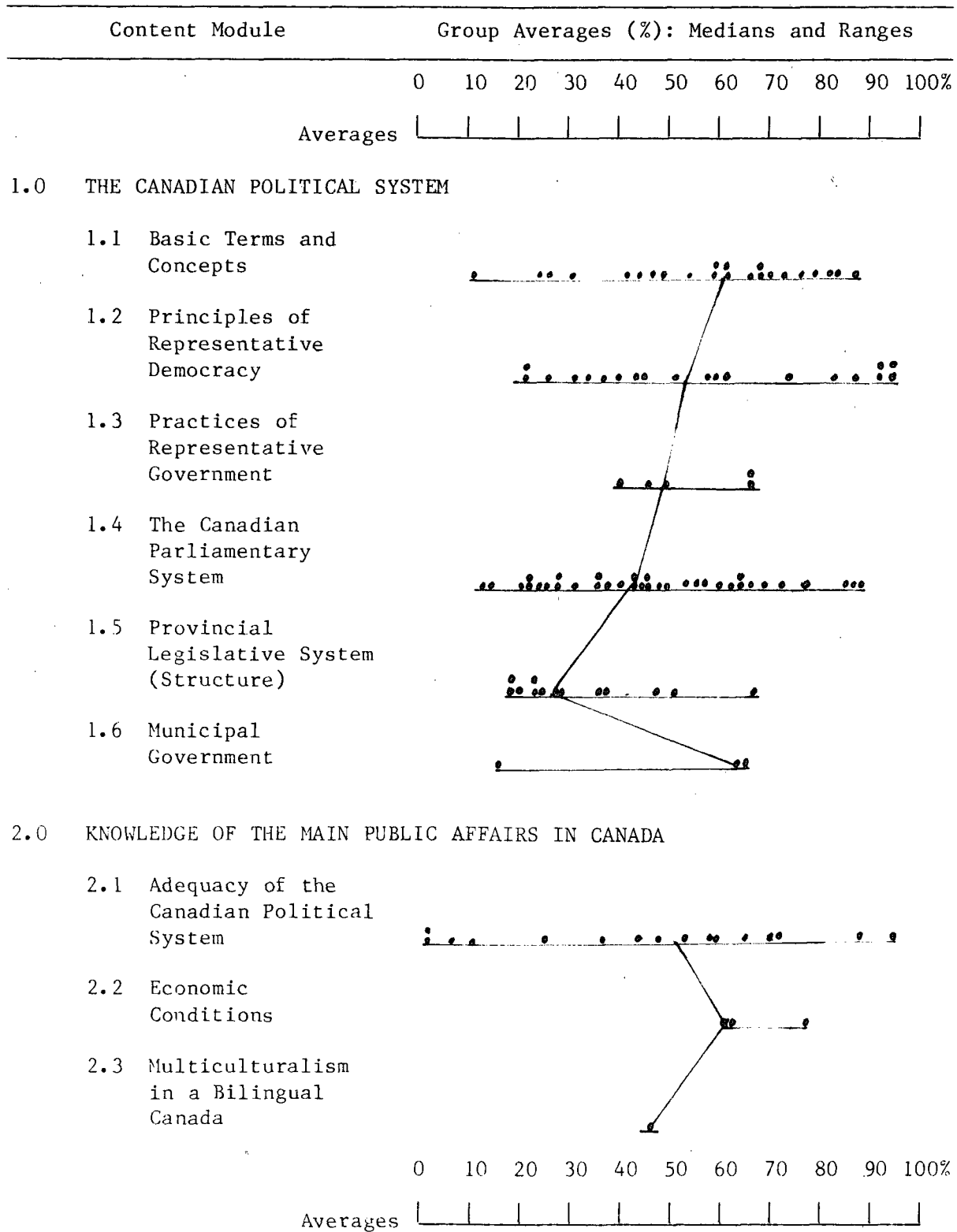


Table 11 (Cont'd)

Grade 12 Citizenship Summaries of Results

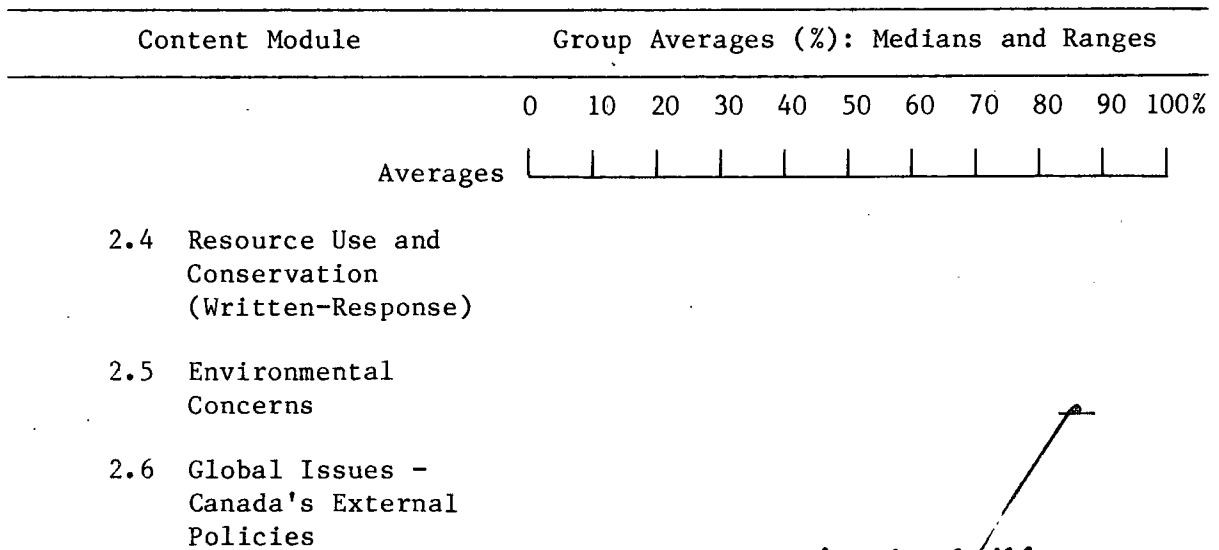


Table 12

Grade 12 Geography Summaries of Results: Medians (Mid-Points) and Ranges of Group Averages According to Content Module

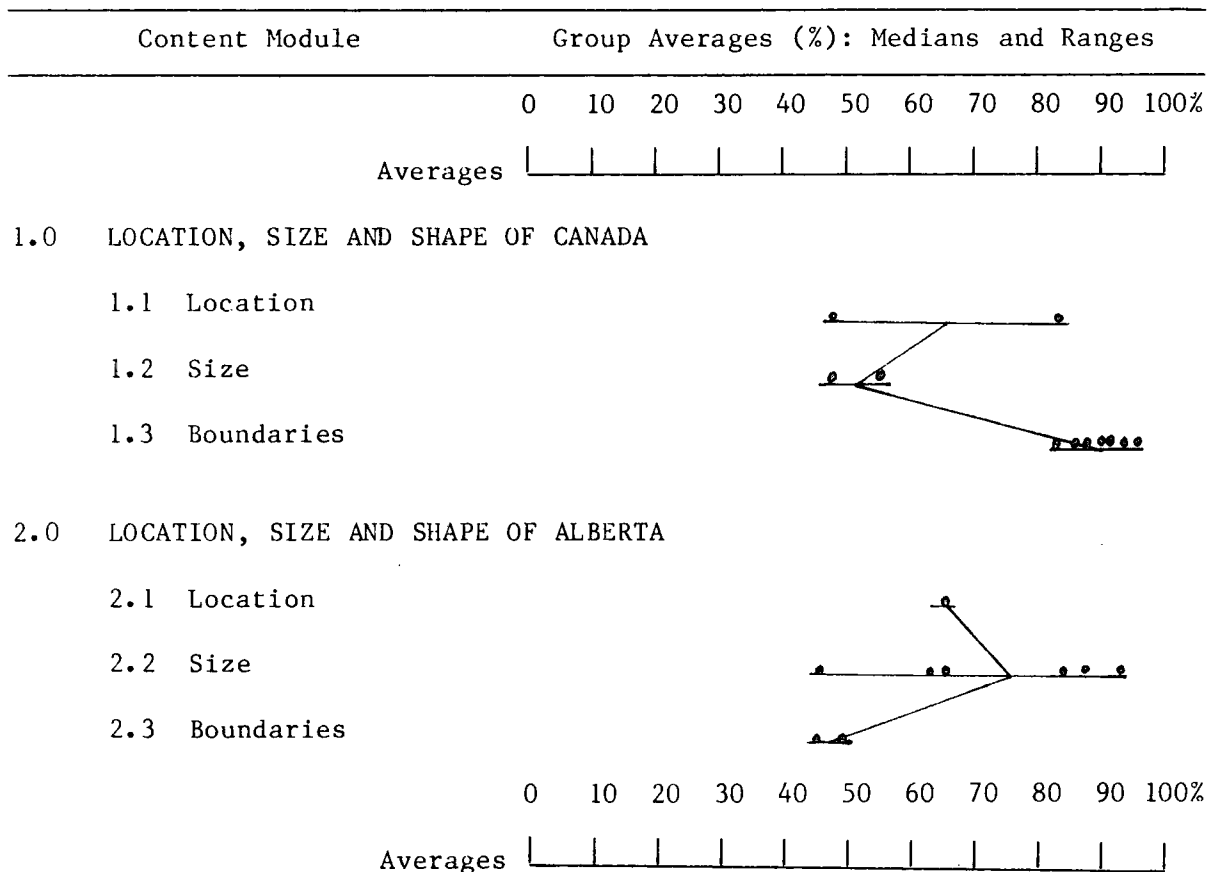


Table 12 (Cont'd)

Grade 12 Geography Summaries of Results

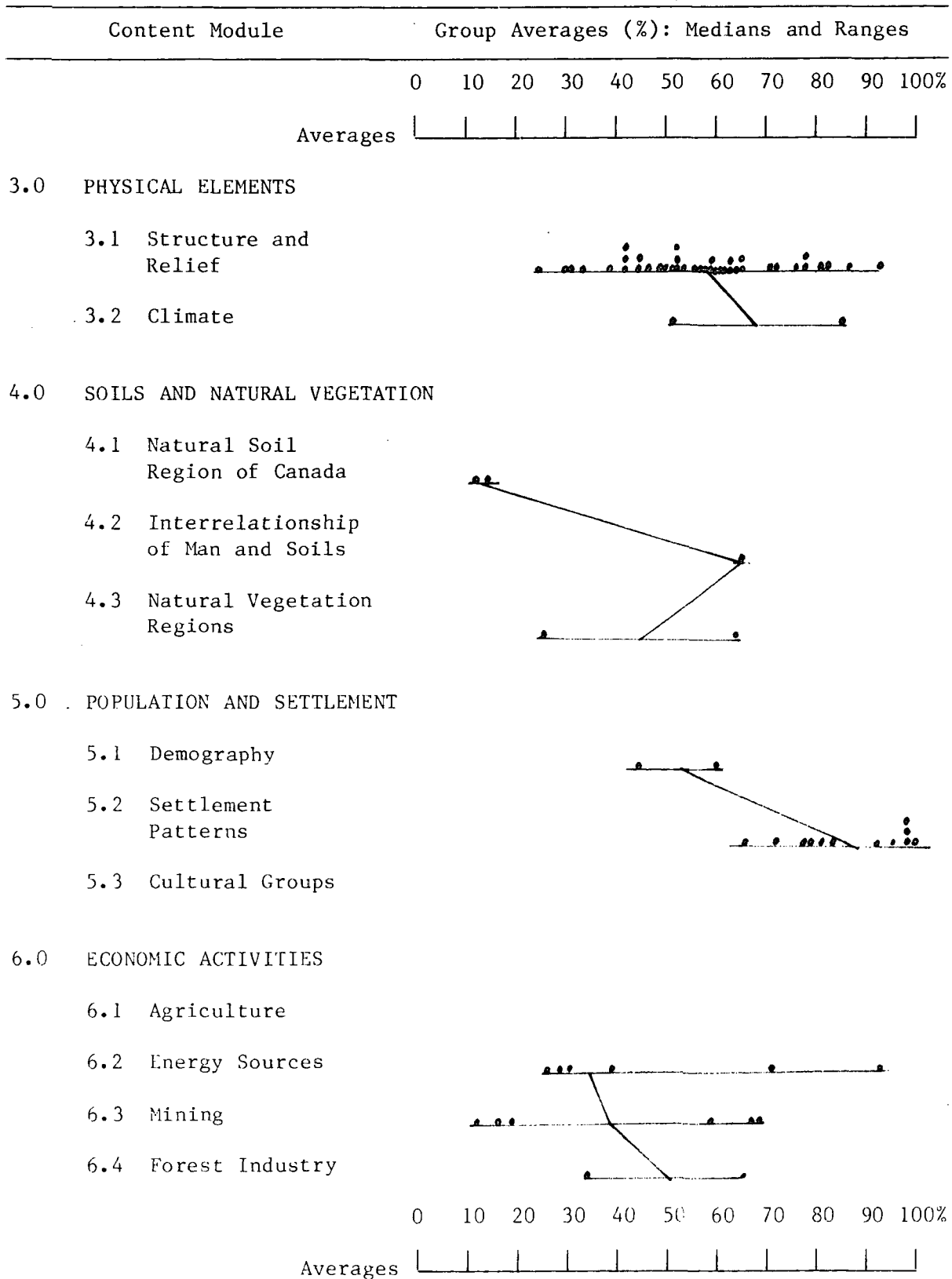


Table 12 (Cont'd)

Grade 12 Geography Summaries of Results

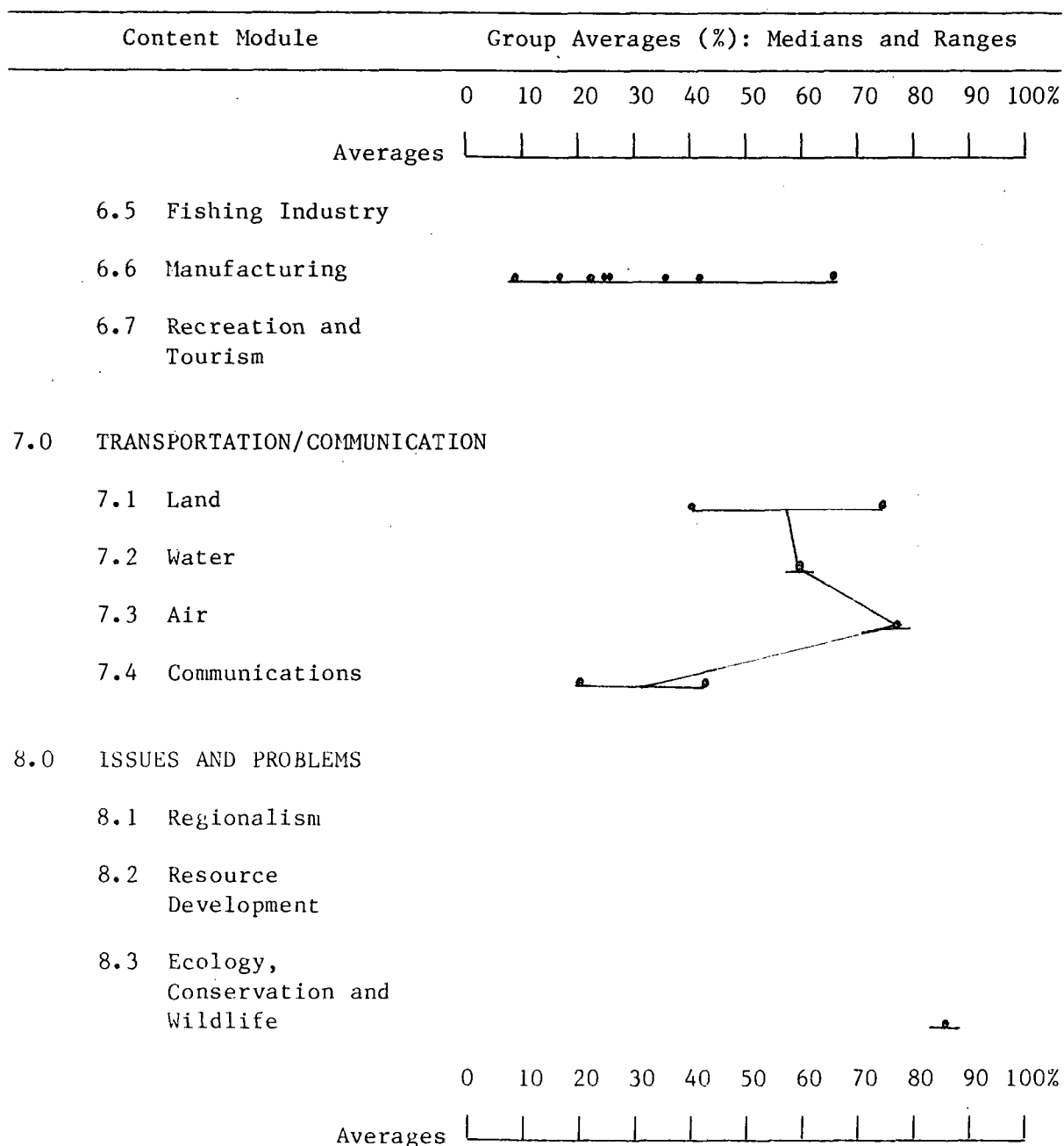
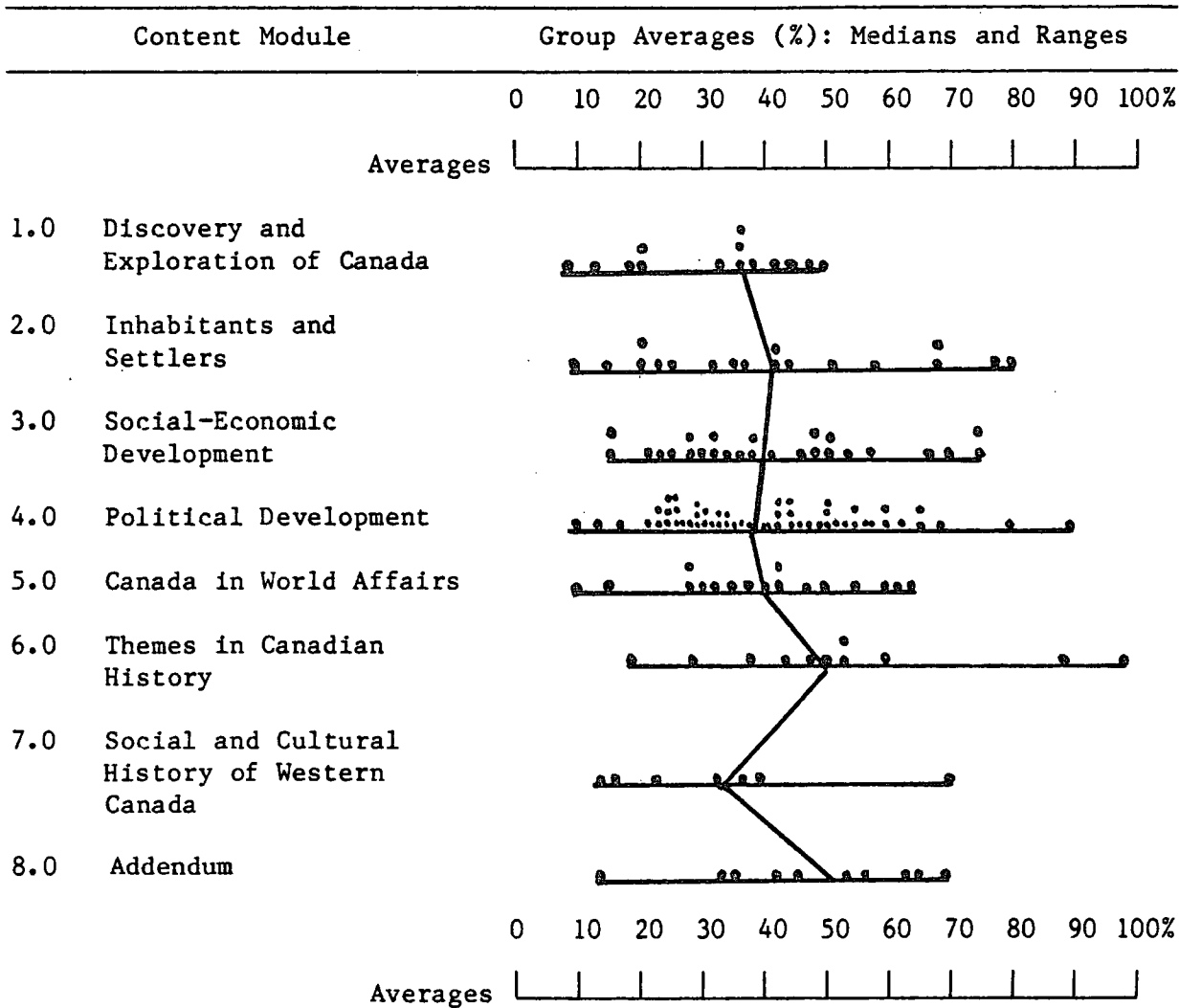


Table 13

Grade 12 History Summaries of Results: Medians
(Mid-Points) and Ranges of Group Averages
According to Content Module



Written Responses

The charts comparing all level items in Citizenship and History are presented as exemplars of written response results. (The complete content analysis of all sixty-three items appear in the Main Report under the appropriate sections and a condensed version of these appear in the Appendix of this Summary Report.)

In the charts to follow, the CONTENT CATEGORIES represent the full range of responses to a given item. The DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT RESPONSES compares the number of content categories employed by the students in their answers across the three grade levels. The brief commentary is intended to further elucidate the general nature and tone of the material.

Chart 1

Comparison of All Level Written Response Items in Citizenship
"What is the difference between an MLA and an MP?"

CONTENT CATEGORIES	
1.	MLA - member of the Legislative Assembly
2.	elected
3.	provincial level of government
4.	MP - member of Parliament
5.	elected
6.	federal level of government
7.	MP - mounted police
8.	MP - military police
9.	role descriptions

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT RESPONSES			
Content	Per Cent of Students		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
No Response	47	44	13
Inappropriate	29	15	13
One Category	NIL	7	9
Two Categories	18.5	14	13
Three Categories	1	10	16
Four Categories	3.5	8.5	23
More Than Four Categories	1	2	13

All grade levels tested have difficulty comprehending just what this question requires. Approximately 75 per cent of the grade 6 students do not or can not answer at all as compared to 75 per cent of the grade 12 students who show a basic understanding. Forty per cent of the grade 9 students know what a member of Parliament and a member of a legislative assembly are but do not elaborate their functions well.

Chart 2

Comparison of All Level Written Response Items in Citizenship
"What is Alberta's Heritage Trust Fund and how is it used?"

CONTENT CATEGORIES	
what it is	
1.	special fund set up by the government of Alberta
2.	out of a percentage of revenues from natural resources (mainly the oil and natural gas industry)
3.	totals in the billions of dollars (approximately 7)
major purposes	
4.	to secure the economic future of Alberta, i.e., aid in the diversification of Alberta's economy
5.	to develop the social, cultural (and political) life of Albertans
examples of uses to date	
6.	doing research
7.	investigating possibilities for new ventures
8.	cultural programs and projects, e.g., Alberta'75 - historical artifacts
9.	loans to other provinces - railway cars - special construction projects

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT RESPONSES			
Content	Per Cent of Students		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
No Response	33	17	5
Inappropriate	23	32	22
One Category	28.5	28	21
Two Categories	12.5	NIL	25
Three Categories	2	21	15
Four Categories	1		12
More Than Four Categories	NIL	2	NIL

This is a very difficult question for grade 6, about half of the grade 9 students sampled are able to answer at a rather superficial level and approximately 70 per cent of the grade 12 sample offer appropriate responses.

Chart 3

Comparison of All Level Written Response Items in Citizenship
"Why are oil, coal and gas called non-renewable resources?"

CONTENT CATEGORIES	
1.	they cannot be replaced once they are used; cannot be recycled, cannot grow, become "burned up"
2.	it takes millions of years to form fossil fuels
3.	discovery and development of alternate sources of energy
4.	waste, pollution, conservation

Content	Per Cent of Students		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
No Response	14	4	1
Inappropriate	16	8	6
One Category	53	48	47
Two Categories	14	31	33.5
Three Categories	2	7	10
Four Categories	1	2	2.5

The difficulty level of this item was such that it can be answered sensibly by all grades concerned. The grade 6 responses are rather simple and show some difficulty in staying on topic. The grade 12 responses are (not surprisingly) the best, although they do not give the impression that the question was taken as much of a challenge. The grade 9 responses match the grade 12 fairly closely and show considerable interest and effort in the question. One might conclude that those students sampled demonstrate an optimal level of knowledge and understanding in response to this item and that the item itself is most suited to a grade 9 level of comprehension.

Chart 4

Comparison of All Level Written Response Items in History
"What does the term "Dirty Thirties" mean?"

CONTENT CATEGORIES	
1.	time span: 1930-1940 - began with Stock Market Crash - ended with World War II - 10 years in the 1930's
2.	the Depression
3.	climatic/environmental: years of drought - dust storms, dry wind - no rain, no crops, livestock starved
4.	amplifications: effects on business and industry - economic instability and poverty - low employment and/or money shortages - food shortages, starvation - social effects, hardtimes - political effects

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT RESPONSES			
Content	Per Cent of Students		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
No Response, Inappropriate	53.5	22	7
One Major Point (With Mixed Amplifications)	24.5	26	17
Two or Three Categories or Amplifications (Some Inappropriate)	16.5	28	25.5
More Than Three Categories or Amplifications	5.5	24	50.5

For this item three major categories--time span, depression and climate/environmental problems were considered crucial to a knowledge of the "Dirty Thirties." Other attributes such as personal, social, political, and economic effects were considered amplifications. The majority of students who are able to answer this item do mention at least one of the three major categories. Grade 6 students do very poorly on this item. Grade 9 students do better; most have one or more appropriate points to make. It was only with grade 12 students, however, that a large proportion are able to give an acceptable description of the "Dirty Thirties" and some of the ramifications of this time period. The concept of the Depression is more frequently used by grade 9 and grade 12 students. The concepts of drought and crop failure tend to be more familiar to the grade 6 students indicating, perhaps, that those students who are able to relate the Depression to the "Dirty Thirties" give a more comprehensive answer to this question. In addition, the number of misconceptions and inappropriate responses decreases rapidly from grade 6 to grade 9 to grade 12.

Chart 5

Comparison of All Level Written Response Items in History
"What was Rupert's Land?"

CONTENT CATEGORIES
1. territories granted to the Hudson's Bay Company
2. by the British Crown (Charles II)
3. in the 17th Century (1670)
4. named after Prince Rupert (first governor of the Company)
5. included all lands drained by the rivers flowing into Hudson Bay
6. miscellaneous descriptions of the land and its usage
7. area around Prince Rupert, B.C.
8. coastal regions, Maritimes, islands, etc.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT RESPONSES

Content	Per Cent of Students		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
No Response	43	37	30
Inappropriate	36	34	41
One Category	14.5	19	1
Two Categories	5	5.5	17
Three Categories	1.5	4.5	8
Four Categories	--	--	3

There is little appreciable difference among the three grade levels in the proportions of no response and inappropriate answers. Of those students who offer some appropriate material in response to this item (21 to 29 per cent), there is a small improvement from grade 6 through to grade 12 as might be expected. For the most part, the students sampled are not familiar with the name "Rupert's Land." The evidence suggests, however, that had they been questioned directly on the charter, activities, land area and historical significance of the Hudson's Bay Company the results might have been quite positive.

Chart 6

Comparison of All Level Written Response Items in History
"What effects did the fur trade have on
exploration in Canada?"

CONTENT CATEGORIES

1. a major impetus to exploration: increasing demand in Europe for pelts
- rivalry among the chartered companies
 2. as fur-bearing animals were depleted in one trapping area, trappers
had to go farther and farther into the wilderness: on these
expeditions they explored and mapped much of the land - Indians acted
as guides
 3. exploration took place mainly along navigable waterways because:
travel was much easier than overland - sought routes by which to ship
pelts to trading posts
-

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT RESPONSES

Content	Per Cent of Students		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
No Response	24	14	5
Inappropriate	51	23	15
One Category	24	42	49
Two Categories	1	16	28
Three Categories	--	5	3

The proportions of no response and inappropriate answers decrease from grade 6 through to grade 12. Of the 25 per cent of the grade 6 students who are able to respond to this question appropriately, most offer only one content category. They are not able to conceptualize the relationships between the fur trade and exploration. Grade 9 students fare much better, but also exhibit a tendency to concentrate on only one aspect of the question. Grade 12 students show a basic understanding of the underlying relationships involved in this item, but tend to state generalizations without offering much in the way of elaborations.

PART 3

INTERPRETATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MINISTER'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Limitations and Delimitations

During consideration of the results of the Canadian Awareness Project testing program the Minister's Advisory Committee remained aware of certain limitations and delimitations which temper its interpretation and conclusions. These constraints are listed as follows:

1. Only knowledge and awareness in citizenship, geography and history are tested. The majority of test items require recall or recognition of specifics. Accordingly, the higher-level thinking skills required in developing or understanding relationships, problem-solving and making modern applications receive relatively little emphasis.
2. Attitudes and opinions held by students are not solicited. (However, readers of the main report will note the unsolicited beliefs and feelings of some students in the descriptive results from written response items.)
3. Communications skills are not assessed (see written-response section results in the main report).
4. Results reflect knowledge of concepts or facts which are not necessarily in any Alberta Curriculum: for example, facts which are not outlined in any Alberta Curriculum program of studies or curriculum guide.
5. Random sampling procedures were used in selecting students assumed to be representative of the populations attending school on the testing dates.

The numbers in the samples were sufficient to permit generalizing the results within known confidence limits: the probability was 19 in 20 that the results obtained were within 5 per cent ($\pm 5\%$) of the true population values for grades 6 and 9, and ($\pm 6\%$) for grade 12.

The grade 12 results were treated with additional caution since the response rates were lower than for grade 6 and 9. For grade 12 the results are generalizable to a population of students who remain in school throughout the year and tend to be regular in attendance, particularly when provincial non-credit tests are administered.

6. A further limitation relates to the degree of motivation which students appeared to bring to the test-taking task. The written response item results provided evidence that some students did not communicate all they might have known. Significant proportions in these groups appeared first at grade 9 and increased at grade 12.

Introduction

For purposes of reporting the Committee's observations and comments the content areas (citizenship, geography and history) are examined by grade. This parallels the format used in the results sections of the report and provides the structure for reporting the Committee's assessments and reactions.

Performance by each grade is examined and noteworthy observations are made. Content modules or groups of items that are well answered are identified. The Committee cautions the reader that although a content module may have a high median there are items within the module that are often not answered at an acceptable level. To further highlight student responses some of the items that are well answered are identified.

With the successes some of the weaknesses or areas of concern are highlighted. Content modules or groups of items that are not well answered are identified. The Committee again cautions the reader that although a content module may have a low median there are items within the module that are often answered at an acceptable level. A significant number of items which are not answered at an acceptable level are identified.

Grade 6 Citizenship: Conclusions

The median for all grade 6 citizenship items is 34 per cent. The fact that only one half of the students are able to score above 34 per cent indicates a low level of knowledge. In light of the cognitive development of most 11 year olds and the number of opportunities many children at that age would have to acquire the information, the results are within the expectations of the Committee. Two out of three items are not answered correctly by 50 per cent of the students. Significant exceptions (scores higher than 70 per cent) are as follows: the name of Alberta's Premier, the date of Alberta's entry into Confederation, the identification of Canada's capital, the recognition of the official languages of Canada and the identification of Canada's police force (RCMP). The better results accrued from items which are current and topical. However, it is of concern to the Committee that on a written-response item about the Heritage Trust Fund, 56 per cent of the students gave either inappropriate responses or no response.

The practices of representative democracy is the content module on which the students are most successful.

Grade 9 Citizenship: Conclusions

The median for grade 9 increased from grade 6 by five points to 39 per cent. The Committee is concerned with this minimal increase and generally expected better results from fourteen year olds.

The average response in the various content modules varies within a narrow range. There are neither exceptionally high nor exceptionally low scores. The Committee considers these results to be mediocre.

High scores are limited to a few specific items. Some of these are the names of the federal parties and their leaders, the choosing of a cabinet, the protection provided by the Individual's Right's Protection Act, federal-provincial relations, regional disparity, the purpose of UNICEF and the importance of conservation. Once again, these items tend to be about topical or current issues often discussed in the media.

The Committee is dismayed that only one third of the students could respond appropriately to an item on the freedom of the press. There is also a lack of ability to identify the people holding political leadership positions provincially (premiers, cabinet ministers).

As with grade 6 students the grade nines are more successful in the module on the practices of representative democracy, indicating a retention of knowledge in this area.

Grade 12 Citizenship: Conclusions

The median for grade 12 students on all items is 49 per cent. The range of average responses to content modules is approximately 30 per cent to approximately 60 per cent.

Highest scores are achieved in areas of basic terms and concepts, the Canadian political system, and municipal government.

Lowest scores are recorded on the structure of the provincial legislative system. A very serious deficiency is in the knowledge of parliamentary systems in Canada both provincial and federal.

While the major concern is with the generally low performance of grade 12 students there are some areas in which the lack of knowledge is particularly evident. Items on which the students scored less than 25 per cent deal with the following topics:

- responsible government;
- branches of the government;
- coalition government;
- lieutenant-governor;
- opposition party in Alberta;
- chief justice of the Supreme Court;
- BNA Act and the division of powers;
- provincial cabinet ministers;
- premiers of the provinces;
- Hansard.

Exceptions to the poor performance can be found on selected items that deal with factual information such as:

- leaders of the federal parties;
- party in power federally;
- leader of the Parti Quebecois;
- recognition of the Monarchy;
- definition of parliamentary government;

Concepts:

- pressure groups;
- constituencies;
- official Opposition;
- vote of non-confidence;
- back-bencher.

Issues:

- conservation;
- nuclear waste disposal;
- population growth;
- Canada's membership in world organizations.

Citizenship: Summary and Conclusions

1. While the levels of students' achievement are not high in grades 6 and 9 of greater concern to the Committee is the low achievement in grade 12.
2. Students at all three grade levels do not have an acceptable knowledge of citizenship. The deficiency is greatest in grade 12.
3. Students tend to perform better on items requiring knowledge of current or topical affairs.
4. Students at all levels lack a knowledge of important facts.
5. Areas of strengths and weaknesses tend to follow from grade 6 through grade 9 and grade 12.
6. Inadequacy of student knowledge is displayed on both written response and objective items.

Because students' lack of awareness about citizenship could result in their inability to perform duties as responsible Canadian and world citizens, this Committee is apprehensive.

Grade 6 Geography: Conclusions

The median of all the items in grade 6 geography is 51 per cent. Students generally did better on objective items than on written response items.

Items dealing with matters with which students are familiar are well answered. Map questions on Western Canada are answered better than map questions on Canada generally. On map locations of Alberta, British Columbia and Edmonton, students responded with scores over 90 per cent. The modules in which the students performed the best are the location, size and boundaries of Canada and Alberta and the location of major Canadian cities, however, it concerns the Committee that the students' knowledge of geography is largely limited to Western Canada.

Student performance in the modules structure and relief, and cultural groups is not acceptable. The specific items or groups of items that are poorly answered deal with the following topics:

- latitude and longitude;
- time zones;
- the largest island in Canada;
- natural barriers to transportation to the West Coast;
- the Great Divide;
- number of provinces in Canada;
- "landlocked".

There is a lack of knowledge about the location of resources and industries, and of transportation and communication systems.

Grade 9 Geography: Conclusions

The median for all grade 9 items is 55 per cent. Students in grade 9 performed slightly better than students in grade 6, 55 per cent as compared to 51 per cent.

The modules in which student performance is high are the location, size and shape of Canada, the location of major Canadian cities, and climate. The items on which the results are high (over 90 per cent) deal with the location of North and South America and all the provinces of Canada except the Maritimes. Students are also able to identify the bodies of water bordering Canada, the Rocky Mountains, the Arctic Islands, and several major Canadian cities.

Content modules which are not answered well are the location, size and shape of Alberta; structure and relief; cultural groups; economic activity especially forestry resources and manufacturing; and communications. Items on which the students scored less than 25 per cent deal with the following topics:

- time zones in Canada;
- "landlocked";
- drainage patterns in Western Canada and the Arctic;
- location of the Peace River;
- economic importance of furs;
- seigneurial system;
- associating several cities with their resource production;
- associating several cities with their industries;
- Yellowhead Highway;
- year-round eastern harbour;
- radio as a first form of electronic mass communication;
- Anik satellite.

Students do not show as much growth in geography knowledge from grade 6 to grade 9 as the Committee would have expected. The Committee is especially disappointed with the level of knowledge displayed in selected aspects of economic geography. On the positive scale, grade 9 students seemed to do well on some of the map work tasks and on questions about climate.

Grade 12 Geography: Conclusions

The median for all grade 12 items in geography is 59 per cent. The Committee believes that the overall performance of grade 12 students on geography test items is not acceptable. There are serious gaps in their knowledge about geography that are not appropriate for students about to graduate from high school.

However, there are areas in which the students did extremely well. Well answered modules include the location, shape and size of Canada; the location of major Canadian cities; transportation; ecology; and the size of Alberta. Examples of items which were well answered are the map locations of provinces, among others. It is significant that 100 per cent of the students are able to locate the city of Edmonton on a map.

Content modules in which the results are unsatisfactory are the soil regions of Canada, the vegetation regions of Canada, energy sources, manufacturing, and communications. Items which are inadequately answered by a majority of students include:

- the location of the Peace River;
- use of the brown soil zone;
- identifying the most fertile soil;
- the size of Canada;
- identifying landforms of Alberta;
- locating lakes, rivers and drainage basins;
- locating some physiographic regions;
- identifying soil zones and types;
- the problem of industrial development on the tundra;
- locating population distribution and density;
- associating several Canadian cities with resource production;
- associating several Canadian cities with industries;
- identifying the CRTC and Anik satellite.

On written response items students experienced difficulties with the comprehension of specific terms and conceptualization. There is not enough elaboration and amplification given for these items.

Geography: Summary and Conclusions

Students at all three grade levels displayed a weak understanding of economic geography, demographic concepts and regional disparity. They had difficulty with factual and specific information. On the written response items they had problems with understanding and using basic terms and generally answered in a minimal fashion. On the maps, broader areas of knowledge are better identified than the fine detail.

Canada's physical environment is characterized by its vastness, resources, landscape, land use, climate, population and the interrelationship of these components, among others. For that reason the Committee believes there is a need to develop a greater sense of awareness of these concepts in our younger citizens.

Grade 6 History: Conclusions

The median for all grade 6 history items is 39 per cent. The range of medians for individual modules is approximately 30 per cent to approximately 50 per cent. The module at the upper level of the range is called Themes in Canadian History. The content module at the lower portion of the range is called Political Development.

Items on which students scored over 70 per cent are:

- shelter used by Plains Indians before the Europeans arrived;
- important animal hunted by early Prairie Indians;
- the first prime minister of Canada;
- organization established during World War II to maintain peace;
- identification of the three Prairie provinces.

Items on which students scored below 30 per cent are too numerous to mention. A few examples are:

- European explorer who "discovered" Alberta;
- origin of the North American Indians;
- name of the early French immigrants who came to Nova Scotia;
- the natural resource which first attracted Europeans to Canada;
- the first major oil discovery in Alberta;
- year of Confederation;
- written portion of Canada's Constitution.

Seventy-two per cent of the students are able to recognize in a multiple choice item the name of Canada's first prime minister. However, only 31 per cent were able to answer correctly the same question on a completion item.

In the opinion of the Committee the results of this test are far from satisfactory.

Grade 9 History: Conclusions

The median for all grade 9 history items is 40 per cent. The range of medians for the modules is approximately 20 per cent to approximately 50 per cent. The module with the highest median is called Themes in Canadian History. The module with the lowest median is called Discovery and Exploration of Canada.

Isolated items are, however, well answered, e.g., Terry Fox, Alberta's floral emblem, two provinces created in 1905, "last spike," original name of Fort Edmonton, three Prairie provinces, among others.

Examples of items, among others, which are poorly answered deal with the following topics:

- founding of Quebec;
- exploration of what is now Alberta;
- person responsible for the establishment of the Red River Settlement;

- definition of a township;
- national policy of Sir John A. Macdonald;
- Palliser expedition;
- seigneurial system;
- United Empire Loyalists;
- freight rates (Crowsnest Pass Agreement);
- oil boom in Alberta;
- longest serving Canadian prime minister;
- leaders of the French and British forces at the Plains of Abraham;
- written portion of Canada's Constitution;
- Canada's Motto;
- Treaty Number Seven;
- "Wop" May;
- Statute of Westminster;
- selected aspects of World War I and World War II;
- first premier of Alberta.

Some of the items above that are poorly answered deal with important Canadian history concepts and the Committee is perturbed by these results.

Grade 12 History: Conclusions

The median for all grade 12 history items is 39 per cent. The range of medians for the individual modules is approximately 30 per cent to approximately 50 per cent. The module with the highest median is called Themes in Canadian History. The module with the lowest median is called Social and Cultural History of Western Canada.

Examples of items which are well answered (over 70 per cent) deal with the following topics:

- recent political refugees;
- 18th Century Hudson's Bay Company rival;
- British General at the Plains of Abraham;
- first prime minister of Canada;
- name of the government owned railroad;
- Constitutional Act 1791;
- three Prairie provinces;
- Chinooks;
- Canada and United States border;
- last three prime ministers;
- Alberta and Saskatchewan's confederation date.

As indicated by the above list relatively few of the items on the history test are answered correctly by as many as 7 in 10 students. Even in these cases the response level is not always judged to be adequate. For example, the Committee feels more students should have known the identity of the British General at the Plains of Abraham. There are many other items of equal concern.

There are many more poorly answered questions (below 25 per cent) than well answered questions. Some of these items relate to:

- selected explorers;
- selected aspects of settlement;
- Riel Rebellion (1885);
- Canada's motto;
- 1849 Annexation Manifesto;
- 1837 Rebellions;
- Upper and Lower Canada;
- Brebeuf;
- Company of 100 Associates;
- "On-to-Ottawa" march;
- Palliser expedition;
- Statute of Westminster;
- 1919 flu epidemic.

The median of 39 per cent indicates a decided lack of factual knowledge of Canadian history. This absence of knowledge helps to explain most students' inability to support their opinions on written response items. For students in this age group this level of knowledge is definitely not satisfactory.

History: Summary and Conclusion

In light of Canada's unique and exciting history this Committee is sharply disappointed with the overall results of the history tests. Furthermore, to the extent that factual historical knowledge could inhibit a person's ability to develop a sense of national identity, the Committee is dismayed at the level of knowledge indicated by the results. The Committee believes that a firm knowledge of one's national history (set in a world context) can greatly encourage a sense of justifiable pride in one's country. Greater historical knowledge can only lead to that end.

The Committee is disappointed that the median of students responding correctly is only 39 per cent for grade 6, 40 per cent for grade 9 and 39 per cent for grade 12. In the opinion of this Committee students at all levels lack an adequate knowledge base in Canadian history to enable them to deal with current social and political issues.

General Conclusions

The Committee believes that factual knowledge, skills and attitudes are basic components of being a good citizen. The Terms of Reference of this project limit the study to an assessment of a knowledge base. The Committee views such a knowledge base as essential.

The tests were designed to measure only the knowledge level that students could have about Canadian history, geography and citizenship. Test items reflect a sample of the possible questions that could have been asked.

The Committee acknowledges that the amount of factual knowledge students possess is determined by many factors: home life, institutions (church, school, organizations), peer groups, the media, traditions, and travel, among others.

Although the disciplines are interrelated the Committee treated history, citizenship and geography as separate disciplines. However, the Committee views these disciplines as being interrelated. The reader is referred to page 31 for previously mentioned additional limitations and delimitations.

General conclusions are as follows:

1. The Committee is heartened to note there is a minority of students whose level of awareness is admirable. Other young citizens should be encouraged to aspire to that higher level of awareness.
2. The Committee concludes that more young citizens should have a higher level of Canadian awareness than was demonstrated in this project.
3. The Committee expected indications of more growth from grade to grade on common test items (see the all level results in Appendix 2).
4. The written response items were not as effectively answered as the Committee expected (see Appendix 3).

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. interested parties (government departments, organizations, individuals among others) evaluate their potential roles in heightening Canadian awareness in all its aspects. All citizens including their elected and appointed officials must accept their responsibilities in this area.
2. an examination of all curricula be undertaken to determine the extent to which Canadian awareness (as assessed by the Committee) is prescribed.
3. if a review of the curricula reveals inadequate Canadian content, appropriate modifications be made.
4. an examination of the processes by which content of the Social Studies curriculum is delivered be undertaken.
5. judicious consideration be given to the advisability of replacing the Social Studies curriculum in order to give due emphasis to Canadian history, geography and citizenship.
6. an examination be made of the teacher education programs in the province to assess their adequacy in preparing all teachers to take leadership roles in heightening Canadian awareness.
7. Canadian Awareness Tests be administered to a sample of grades 6, 9 and 12 students in the province of Alberta during the 1984-85 school year.
8. test items not required for future testing be made available to the Student Evaluation Branch.
9. this report, along with its recommendations be distributed to as many interested parties as is feasible.
10. all citizens consider the implications of these results for Canada, which must continue to function in an increasingly interdependent world. The time for renewal is now.

Closing Comment

"A person's feet ought to be firmly placed on his own land but his eyes should survey the world."

Note: The Committee is aware that the Social Studies Curriculum has been revised with increased emphasis on Canadian content.

A P P E N D I X 1

Detailed Results For Objective Test Items
(For Multiple-Choice, Matching and
Completion-Type Questions)

Summary Results For Written
Response-Type Questions

Table 14

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in Citizenship
The Canadian Political System

1.1 Basic Terms and Concepts	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Democracy	26 (2)*	39 (3)	54 (4)
Federal System	46 (4)	40 (2)	62 (3)
Responsible Government	--	28 (2)	47 (1)
Constitutions	21 (2)	47 (2)	76 (2)
Constitutional Monarchy	41 (3)	55 (3)	72 (3)
Parliamentary Government	61 (2)	79 (2)	72 (3)
Functions of Government	30 (6)	38 (7)	44 (7)
Citizenship	73 (1)	--	--
Median	34	42	61

*Note: Numerals within the brackets indicate the number of items in each cluster.

Least Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: definition of representative democracy
- Grade 9: direct democracy and responsible government
- Grade 12: definition of the executive branch of government

Most Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: definition of Canadian citizenship
- Grade 9: origin of the Canadian parliamentary system
- Grade 12: structure of parliament

1.2 Principles of Representative Democracy		Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12	
Political Parties	50 (13)	65 (10)	64 (9)	
Interest Groups	--	23 (3)	63 (2)	
Periodic Elections	25 (1)	37 (1)	58 (1)	
Universal Franchise	--	52 (2)	26 (1)	
Representation by Population	30 (2)	39 (3)	52 (4)	
Power of the Purse	63 (1)	49 (1)	--	
Independent Judiciary	--	30 (1)	21 (1)	
Freedom of the Press	21 (1)	34 (1)	59 (1)	
Median	40	49	55	

Least Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: defining freedom of the press
- Grade 9: definition of lobbying
- Grade 12: former name of NDP, appointment of Alberta Supreme Court Justices

Most Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: current governing political party, sources of government revenue
- Grade 9: leaders of political parties
- Grade 12: political parties and party leaders

1.3 Practices of Representative Government		Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12	
Selection of Representatives	53 (4)	30 (3)	65 (1)	
Electoral Machinery	47 (4)	41 (3)	57 (2)	
Franchise Qualifications	--	39 (1)	--	
Types of Elected Governments	--	--	43 (2)	
Median	62	35	49	

Least Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: definition of Returning Officer
- Grade 9: number of MPs from Alberta
- Grade 12: definition of 2 coalition governments

Most Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: association of candidate with political party
- Grade 9: purpose of the secret ballot
- Grade 12: definition of an independent candidate and reasons for election deposits

Table 15

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in Citizenship:
The Canadian Political System

1.4 The Canadian Parliamentary System	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
The BNA Act 1867	50 (5)	53 (4)	46 (4)
Queen	18 (1)	--	62 (1)
Governor General	39 (3)	37 (2)	73 (2)
House of Commons	36 (11)	37 (11)	57 (11)
Cabinet	33 (11)	41 (12)	37 (8)
Senate	--	38 (2)	46 (4)
Role of Law and Civil Liberties	73 (1)	29 (1)	28 (2)
Canadian Bill of Rights	33 (1)	--	55 (1)
Due Process of Law	--	--	39 (1)
Median	36	43	44

Least Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: identification of federal cabinet ministers
- Grade 9: definition of party whip
- Grade 12: change in Governor-General's role

Most Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: location of Canada's parliament
- Grade 9: definition of the cabinet
- Grade 12: definition of the official Opposition

1.5	Provincial Legislative System	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
	The Alberta Act	79 (1)	--	--
	Scope of Provincial Powers	--	69 (1)	39 (3)
	Lieutenant-Governor	19 (2)	23 (3)	30 (2)
	Legislative Assembly	19 (3)	36 (5)	33 (2)
	Cabinet	26 (6)	25 (6)	25 (5)
	Ombudsman	--	36 (2)	--
	The Alberta Bill of Rights	--	--	51 (1)
	Individual's Rights Protection Act	--	82 (1)	--
	Median	18	33	27

Least Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: name of lieutenant-governor of Alberta
- Grade 9: names of provincial cabinet ministers
- Grade 12: names of provincial cabinet ministers

Most Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: the date Alberta became a province
- Grade 9: protection under the Individual's Rights Protection Act
- Grade 12: the major provincial responsibility provided by the BNA Act

Table 15 (Cont'd)

1.6 Municipal Government	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Provincial Responsibility	33 (3)	57 (1)	63 (1)
Types of Municipal Government	13 (1)	58 (2)	--
Structure of Local Governments	32 (2)	--	15 (1)
Areas of Responsibility	19 (2)	25 (1)	62 (1)
Median	23	54	62

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: definition of a reeve

Grade 9: responsibility for assessment and collection of property taxes

Grade 12: role of the reeve

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: definition of a mayor

Grade 9: definition of a municipal government

Grade 12: reasons for different municipal government structures among provinces

Table 16

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in Citizenship:
Knowledge of the Main Public Affairs in Canada

2.1 Adequacy of the Canadian Political System	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Federal-Provincial Relations	55 (3)	50 (4)	73 (3)
Political Leadership	9 (10)	24 (11)	40 (12)
Equalization Grants	--	43	43 (1)
Median	5	23	51

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: names of other provinces' premiers

Grade 9: premiers of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Grade 12: premiers of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: province with a french speaking majority

Grade 9: premier of Alberta

Grade 12: premier of Alberta

2.2 Economic Conditions in Canada	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Foreign Participation in the Canadian Economy	--	--	68 (2)
Economic Cycles--Economic Instability	--	--	61 (1)
Income Distribution	--	66 (2)	11
Median	--	64	61

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: only written-response question was administered

Grade 9: province with the least number of unemployed

Grade 12: goals of the Committee for an Independent Canada

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: see written response results in the main report

Grade 9: region with the lowest standard of living

Grade 12: reason for tariffs

Table 16 (Cont'd)

2.3 Multiculturalism in a Bilingual Canada	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Ethnic Diversity of Canadian Population	--	52 (2)	46 (1)
Concentrations of Minority Groups	84 (1)	60 (1)	--
Bilingualism in the Civil Service	71 (1)	--	--
Median	78	60	46

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: the official languages of Canada

Grade 9: melting pot vs. mosaic

Grade 12: written response results in main report

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: location of the largest concentration of francophones in Canada

Grade 9: percentage of francophones in Canada

Grade 12: (written response results in main report)

2.4 Resource Use and Conservation--see results to written response questions in the main report.

2.5 Environmental Concerns	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6*	Grade 9	Grade 12
Waste Disposal and Protection of the Environment	46	--	86

*Note: See written-response item results in main report.

Results For Items Tested

Grade 6: 46 per cent know that waste disposal is a major problem in nuclear power generation

Grade 9: not tested

Grade 12: 86 per cent know that waste disposal is a major problem in nuclear power generation

2.6 Global Issues--Canada's External Affairs Policies	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
World Population Explosion	--	60 (2)	72 (1)
Problems of World Peace	49 (1)	26 (1)	67 (1)
Relations With International Organizations	45 (2)	45 (5)	60 (3)
Survival of Nations	--	--	73 (1)
Median	49	44	70

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: the common tie of the Commonwealth of Nations

Grade 9: the world peace roles of Pearson and the Canadian army

Grade 12: Canadian Armed Forces' peacekeeping role in Cyprus

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: reason for establishing the United Nations

Grade 9: UNICEF is part of the United Nations

Grade 12: Canada's membership in three major international organizations

Chart 7

Citizenship Written Responses

1.1 BASIC TERMS AND CONCEPTS - Grade 12

What are three of the requirements for Canadian citizenship?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	10
One Content Category	26
Two Content Categories	51
Three Content Categories	13

Generally speaking, the answers to this question are adequate. Most respondents are aware of the age requirements, residence requirements, and application procedures.

These students display very few unfounded notions or unreasonable guesses. These responses stand in contrast to the tone of response to the very similar item asking for two ways in which Canadian citizenship might be acquired.

The discrepancy might be due to the differences in format of the test booklets. The item asking for two requirements is the second of two written response items. The item asking for three requirements is the only written response item.

1.1 BASIC TERMS AND CONCEPTS - Grade 12

What are two ways in which Canadian citizenship may be acquired?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	11
One Content Category	62
Two Content Categories	2
Three Content Categories	25

Although almost 90 per cent of the students respond to this question with some appropriate information and the wording of the item is quite straight forward, over half of the students offer only one way in which citizenship might be acquired. The overall tone of the answers suggests that the students do not consider this to be an important issue.

1.1 BASIC TERMS AND CONCEPTS - Grade 12

What is meant by an "unwritten" part of the constitution?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	60
One Content Category	38
Two Content Categories	2

In addition to the 11 per cent of the students who make no response, almost 50 per cent demonstrate no real understanding or serious attempt at answering the question. These answers are either irrelevant or even deliberately silly.

Of the 40 per cent of the respondents who come close to the concept, the ideas of Common Law, tradition, practice and precedent predominate. There is some confusion over the constitutional status of human rights. Statutes, reports of Royal Commissions and decisions of the the British Privy Council are not considered directly at all.

Generally speaking, the concept of an "unwritten constitution," whether in the Canadian context or not, appears to be rather poorly developed.

Chart 7 (Cont'd)

Citizenship Written Responses

1.3 PRACTICES OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT - Grade 6

What Is the difference between an MLA and an MP?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	76
One Content Category	5
Two Content Categories	13.5
Three Content Categories	1
Four Content Categories	3.5
More Than Four Categories	1

Seventy-six per cent of the students do not know that the letter designations in the item stem refer to political positions. The most common misconceptions are that MP stands for military police (6 per cent) or mounted police (2 per cent). Of the responses with appropriate content, 7.5 per cent of the students demonstrate only a partially accurate understanding, i.e. knowledge of only one definition or confusion about the role description.

Because of the lack of contextual cues in the item stem it is difficult to ascertain whether the students' apparent lack of understanding is due to the vagueness of the question or to a difficulty level which is beyond grade 6.

1.3 PRACTICES OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT - Grade 9

What Is the difference between an MLA and an MP?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	59
One Content Category	7
Two Content Categories	14
Three Content Categories	9.5
Four Content Categories	8.5
More Than Four Categories	2

Of the 41 per cent of the students who provide appropriate content in response to this item, there is considerable evidence to support the interpretation that they are confused by the question, i.e., what is intended by "difference."

Chart 7 (Cont'd)

Citizenship Written Responses

1.3 PRACTICES OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT - Grade 12

What is the difference between an MLA and an MP?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	26
One Content Category	9
Two Content Categories	13
Three Content Categories	19
Four Content Categories	20
More Than Four Categories	13

Over 70 per cent of the students are able to state definitely what the letter abbreviations in the item stem stand for and 50 per cent are able to add that both positions are elected. There is also a fairly clear distinction made between the two levels of government (over 30 per cent). However, there is some confusion as to whether or not the question calls for further elaboration concerning role descriptions. Where these are offered, only about half of them are accurate.

1.3 PRACTICES OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT - Grade 12

Define a coalition government.

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	61
One Content Category	25
Two Content Categories	13
Three Content Categories	1

Of the students who respond appropriately to this item, a general awareness of the idea of union, combination or compromise is demonstrated, although precise definition is lacking. There is considerable mention of minority-majority situations minus the formalized aspect of coalition.

Supporting examples are few and poor. Only three papers evidence a clear understanding of the concept.

1.4 THE CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM - Grade 12

What are some of the controversies surrounding the Canadian Senate?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	63
One Content Category	12
Two Content Categories	21
Three Content Categories	4

The students do not seem to be well enough acquainted with the structure of our parliamentary system to consider the controversies surrounding the Senate. Without a working knowledge of the nature of the membership and the nature of that body's purposes and functions (present and historical) it is very difficult to discuss reform or abolition intelligently.

Chart 7 (Cont'd)

Citizenship Written Responses

1.4 THE CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM - Grade 12

What are three functions of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the House of Commons?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	44.5
One Content Category	12
Two Content Categories	19.5
Three Content Categories	24

The major misunderstanding of this item is a confusion of "Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition" with "Her Majesty" or "Her Majesty's representative." This accounts for 20 per cent of the students (the other 9 per cent being miscellaneous guesses or facetious comments).

Of those papers which demonstrate a very basic understanding (2 categories) of the functions of an opposition, a truly representative picture of the responses would probably require a collapsing of content categories because the distinctions made are imprecise. However, one-quarter of the students express a reasonably clear knowledge of the significance of the opposition in a parliamentary system.

1.4 THE CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM - Grade 12

In our parliamentary system, what is a private member's bill?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	66
One Content Category	12
Two Content Categories	15
Three Content Categories	5
Four Content Categories	2

This is a very difficult question for students. They appear to be confused by the phrases "private member" and "parliamentary system." In order to compensate for their lack of precise understanding of the question they offer a considerable amount of extraneous detail on general parliamentary procedures.

2.2 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS - Grade 6

What is Alberta's Heritage Trust Fund and how is it used?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	56
One Content Category	28.5
Two Content Categories	12.5
Three Content Categories	3

Over 50 per cent of the students cannot answer this question. Of the appropriate answers, most students cannot say what the Alberta Heritage Trust Fund is, but respond in terms of how it has been used. The common specifics are about the 75th Anniversary celebrations and providing loans to other provinces. Where they do address the question of what it is, they interpret the cue word "heritage" literally in terms of collecting and preserving cultural artifacts. Regarding economic purposes the answers are quite simplistic, e.g., "to buy or build things for Alberta." The major misconceptions have to do with confusing the purposes of the fund with the regular social programmes of the various levels of government.

Chart 7 (Cont'd)

Citizenship Written Responses

2.2 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS - Grade 9

What is Alberta's Heritage Trust Fund and how is it used?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	49
One Content Category	28
Two Content Categories	17
Three Content Categories	4
Four Content Categories	2

Approximately half of the students have a general idea of what the fund is and how it might be used. However, the answers are imprecise, lack supporting examples or provide inappropriate information. Typical examples of use include 75th Anniversary celebrations, railway cars, and loans to other provinces.

2.2 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS - Grade 12

What is Alberta's Heritage Trust Fund and how is it used?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	27
One Content Category	21
Two Content Categories	25
Three Content Categories	15
Four Content Categories	12

Most students realize that the fund has originated somehow from oil and gas revenues. They are definite that the fund is to be used for social and cultural projects and subsidies. The majority of students also think that the money would be used at some future date (after the oil supply is depleted) to bolster Alberta's economy.

Over 20 per cent of the answers involve emotional and quite incoherent tirades against various aspects of governments and politicians in general (Lougheed, Trudeau, the "feds," the East).

One would have to conclude that the students demonstrate a general understanding in response to this question. However, they do not provide much in the way of supportive evidence or cogent argument in their remarks.

2.3 MULTICULTURALISM IN A BILINGUAL CANADA - Grade 9

What are three rights guaranteed to status Indians by the Canadian Government?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	22.5
One Content Category	21
Two Content Categories	35.5
Three Content Categories	20.5
Four Content Categories	1.5

Generally speaking, this question is quite well answered. It is interesting to note that the answers do not focus primarily on the "guaranteed" rights of "status" Indians. These students tend to see the conditions of life and aspirations of the native peoples without such distinctions.

Chart 7 (Cont'd)

Citizenship Written Responses

2.3 MULTICULTURALISM IN CANADA - Grade 12

Define the term "cultural mosaic" as it applies to Canada.

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	27
One Content Category	43
Two Content Categories	24
Three Content Categories	6

The majority of students are acquainted with the term "mosaic" as applied to the preservation of the various cultural heritages within Canada. Some students confuse "mosaic" with "melting pot," but over 4 per cent attempt to clarify the distinguishing features of each in order to convey the idea of pluralism. The concept of a pluralist society is implicit in most answers although the term is not generally employed. Very few students support their answers with specific examples and not one student mentions the Native peoples of this land.

2.4 RESOURCE USE AND CONSERVATION - Grade 6

Why are oil, coal and gas called non-renewable resources?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	30
One Content Category	53
Two Content Categories	14
Three Content Categories	2
Four Content Categories	1

The most common difficulty encountered by the students in response to this item seems to be a misinterpretation of the precise content being required. To their credit, all but 14 per cent of the students attempt an answer to the question, but tend to get caught up in details about the uses of fossil fuels, the wastes produced by their consumption and the necessity for their conservation and discovery. These students appear to assume that the definition of "non-renewable" is self-evident.

Generally speaking, however, over 50 per cent of the students demonstrate a basic understanding of the term in the sense of "cannot be replaced, once used up."

2.4 RESOURCE USE AND CONSERVATION - Grade 6

Give two reasons why it is important that Canadians conserve their natural resources.

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	21.5
One Content Category	51
Two Content Categories	27
Three Content Categories	.5

Although only 8 per cent of the students make no response at all, over 40 per cent give only one reason for conservation. Another 11 per cent give two reasons, only one of which is appropriate.

The most popular reason given for conserving our natural resources is "because when they are gone there will be no more." Over 16 per cent use that as their only reason and another 14 per cent use it in conjunction with another content category. A second recurrent idea is "to save them for our own use when we grow up." The understanding of limited quantities is implicit in these answers, but their perspective places emphasis on having cars, heated houses and recreational areas for themselves in their own lifetime. Over 30 per cent respond in this manner.

There is a strong, singular association of the term "resources" with oil and gas. Where appropriate reference is made to renewable resources, the concentration of concern is with pollution.

Chart 7 (Cont'd)

Citizenship Written Responses

2.4 RESOURCE USE AND CONSERVATION - Grade 9

Why are oil, coal and gas called non-renewable resources?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	12
One Content Category	48
Two Content Categories	31
Three Content Categories	7
Four Content Categories	2

Students answer this question well. The only area of difficulty is in conceptualizing the geological time and processes necessary to produce fossil fuels.

2.4 RESOURCE USE AND CONSERVATION - Grade 12

Why are oil, coal and gas called non-renewable resources?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	7
One Content Category	47
Two Content Categories	40.5
Three Content Categories	3
Four Content Categories	2.5

Over 90 per cent of the students demonstrate an understanding of the term "non-renewable"; however, only a small number make any real effort to elaborate their answers (13 per cent). Among these, conservation is a major concern. Also, there seems to be considerable pessimism at our ability to discover or develop viable alternatives in time to avert serious economic repercussions to the shortages and waste of fossil fuels.

Chart 7 (Cont'd)

Citizenship Written Responses

2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS - Grade 6

Give two ways in which the growth of Canadian cities affect farm production.

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	14
One Content Category	49.5
Two Content Categories	34.5
Three Content Categories	2

Almost 50 per cent of the students offer essentially one effect of the growth of cities on farm production. It is interesting to note that categories dealing with pollution and urban sprawl are by far the most popular single and combined answers comprising 66 per cent in all. It might be concluded that most of these students view urban growth as a destructive influence on agriculture. Very few students (3 to 4 per cent) concentrate on the idea of farm production.

2.6 GLOBAL ISSUES - CANADA'S EXTERNAL POLICIES - Grade 6

What kinds of aid does Canada give to other countries?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	43
One Content Category	32
Two Content Categories	18
Three Content Categories	6
Four Content Categories	1

This is not a well-developed concept at the grade 6 level. The major misconception is a confusion of the idea of assistance with trade. In this context, there are even some students who mention the lower domestic oil and gas prices which Alberta provides to its fellow provinces as "aid to other countries."

Many of the appropriate responses are related to earthquake relief in the form of food, shelter, clothing, money and medical aid. A few relate the idea of aid to UNICEF or the educational and agricultural assistance to underdeveloped countries. Eighteen students mention offering sanctuary to refugees. Thirty-seven students think military aid is active participation in war while only fifteen have any awareness of peace-keeping or alliances.

2.6 GLOBAL ISSUES - CANADA'S EXTERNAL POLICIES - Grade 12

List two ways in which wars fought between two other nations might have direct impact on Canada's welfare.

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	25
One Content Category	35.5
Two Content Categories	21.5
Three Content Categories	17
Four Content Categories	1

The general tone of these answers is one of fear--fear of nuclear annihilation, fear of radioactive pollutants, fear of destruction of the economy, fear of political take-over. Strangely enough, although these students are draft age, they do not see the possibility of being directly involved themselves. They exhibit a rather detached sense of powerlessness.

Table 17

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in Geography:
Location, Size and Shape of Canada

1.1 Location of Canada	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Canada's Relative Position in the World Land Mass	49 (14)	80 (7)	66 (1)

Least Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: latitude of Canada-United States border
- Grade 9: location of Antarctica and Asia
- Grade 12: latitudes between which most Canadians live

Most Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: continent on which Canada is located
- Grade 9: location of North and South America
- Grade 12: the hemisphere in which Canada is located

1.2	Size of Canada	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
	Area of Canada in Comparison With Other Countries and Continents	51 (3)	50 (1)	53 (2)
	Effects of Size	68 (17)	78 (15)	--
	Median	66	84	53

Least Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: number of time zones in Canada, immigration effects
- Grade 9: number of time zones in Canada
- Grade 12: identifying, in order of size, the four largest countries

Most Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: map location of Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia
- Grade 9: map location of Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia
- Grade 12: Canada's rank order according to size of countries

1.3	Boundaries of Canada	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
	Natural Coasts	68 (14)	88 (6)	91 (6)
	Political Boundaries	73 (12)	77 (1)	83 (1)
	Median	72	90	91

Least Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: largest island in Canada, capital of New Brunswick
- Grade 9: longest undefended boundary in the world
- Grade 12: longest undefended boundary in the world

Most Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: capital cities of Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario
- Grade 9: location of Hudson Bay
- Grade 12: location of Hudson Bay

Table 18

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in Geography
Location, Size and Shape of Alberta

2.1	Location of Alberta	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
	Relative Position	55 (7)	60 (2)	68 (1)
	Effects of Location	60 (3)	25 (1)	--
	Median	58	58	68

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: Alberta's northern and southern boundaries

Grade 9: being landlocked causes problems

Grade 12: one item only was administered

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: equator divides North and South Hemispheres, areas bordering Alberta, grain transportation

Grade 9: unique features about living in Lloydminster

Grade 12: 68 per cent identified the main geological formation in Alberta

2.2	Size of Alberta	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
	Area in Comparison With Other Provinces	54 (2)	55 (1)	--
	Effects of Size	48 (7)	64 (6)	74 (6)
	Median	55	60	74

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: barrier to transportation in Western Alberta

Grade 9: Alberta region with the lowest elevation

Grade 12: most important form of transportation to Grande Cache

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: map location of Rocky Mountains

Grade 9: map location of Rocky Mountains

Grade 12: map location of Rocky Mountains

2.3	Alberta's Boundaries	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
	Political Boundaries	55 (4)	75 (1)	--
	Natural Boundaries	41 (1)	46 (1)	46 (1)
	Median	54	60	48

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: identification of the great divide

Grade 9: identification of the largest land form region

Grade 12: identification of the largest land form region in Alberta

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: region north of Alberta, capital city of Canada

Grade 9: smallest Canadian province in area

Grade 12: naming two Maritime provinces

Table 19

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in Geography:
Physical Elements of Canadian Geography

3.1 Structure and Relief	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Natural Drainage and Water Supply	33 (26)	42 (30)	53 (29)
Physiographic Landform Regions	45 (3)	60 (9)	67 (11)
Median	32	44	57

Least Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: map location of Lake Huron
- Grade 9: map location of Lakes: Erie, Ontario, Huron
- Grade 12: map location of the Peace River, Lake Ontario, Lake Huron

Most Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: map location of St. Lawrence River
- Grade 9: as above, Arctic Islands, Lake Winnipeg, St. Lawrence River and Western Cordillera
- Grade 12: map location of the Arctic Islands and Lake Winnipeg

3.2 Climate		Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept		Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Climate Controls		46 (2)	76 (2)	68 (2)
Median		42	75	68

Least Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: Cumulus clouds
- Grade 9: two identical items were administered
- Grade 12: reason for mild climate in St. Lawrence Lowlands

Most Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: Chinooks
- Grade 9: 75.5 per cent know what a Chinook is
- Grade 12: Chinooks

Table 20

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in Geography:
Soils and Natural Vegetation in Canada

4.1 Natural Soils Region in Canada		Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12	
Soils Unique to Western Canada	54 (1)	--	12 (2)	
Other Canadian Soils	73 (1)	--	--	
Median	63	--	12	

Least Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: Black Grassland
- Grade 9: not tested
- Grade 12: use of the largest area of land within the Alberta Brown Soil Zone

Most Frequently Known Items

- Grade 6: Tundra
- Grade 9: not tested
- Grade 12: most fertile prairie soil

Table 20 (Cont'd)

4.2 Interrelationships of Man and Soils		Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12	
Shift in Prairie Soil	47 (2)	--	66 (1)	
Median	57	--	66	

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: location of irrigation in Alberta

Grade 9: not tested

Grade 12: only one item administered

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: definition of irrigation

Grade 9: not tested

Grade 12: 66 per cent know the province with the least amount of arable land

4.3 Natural Vegetation Regions		Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12	
Alberta Vegetation Regions	--	52 (1)	--	
Other Canadian Regions	37 (5)	64 (1)	45 (2)	
Median	43	58	45	

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: location of tallest trees in Canada

Grade 9: name of vegetation zone in South East Alberta

Grade 12: region which would be most affected ecologically by industrial development

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: type of plants in the tundra

Grade 9: vegetation region least suitable for agriculture

Grade 12: two vegetation belts with very little grain farming

Table 21

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in Geography:
Population and Settlement

5.1 Demography		Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
	Numbers	37 (1)	--	--
	Distribution	47 (10)	43 (4)	60 (1)
	Density	45 (4)	--	44 (1)
	Growth Rate	--	58 (1)	--
	Median	44	49	52

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: province with largest population, highest density region

Grade 9: percentage of Albertans in Edmonton and Calgary, most dense Canadian region

Grade 12: Canada's population density

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: map location of Edmonton

Grade 9: province with highest growth rate in last 5 years

Grade 12: majority of population is within 100 miles of United States border

Table 21 (Cont'd)

5.2 Settlement Patterns	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Urban	71	78	86
Empty Space	--	74	--
Median	70	77	88

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: map location of St. John's

Grade 9: geographical region with highest urban population

Grade 12: map location of Quebec city

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: map location of Edmonton

Grade 9: map location of Edmonton

Grade 12: map location of Edmonton

5.3 Cultural Groups	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Native People	49 (1)	--	--
Early Colonization and Settlement	62 (1)	18 (2)	--
Settlement of the West	26 (2)	48 (1)	--
Most Recent Settlers	28 (1)	--	--
Median	28	25	--

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: description of Hutterites

Grade 9: economic resource that attracted the first Europeans to Canada

Grade 12: no question on Cultural Groups

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: continent from which most Canadian immigrants came

Grade 9: reason for early Western settlement

Grade 12: no question on Cultural Groups

Table 22

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in Geography:
Economic Activities

6.1 Agriculture	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Western Canada	47 (10)	--	--
Median	49	--	--

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: fruit growing area in Quebec

Grade 9: no objective items on agriculture

Grade 12: no objective items on agriculture

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: most common type of farming on the Prairies

Grade 9: no objective items on agriculture

Grade 12: no objective items on agriculture

Table 22 (Cont'd)

6.2 Energy Sources	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Coal	--	23 (1)	35 (2)
Hydroelectricity	26 (1)	25 (1)	26 (1)
Oil and Gas	46 (2)	72 (2)	--
Uranium	36 (2)	49 (2)	50 (2)
Emerging Energy Form	60 (3)	68 (4)	93 (1)
Median	50	48	35

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: Alberta oil field discovered in 1947, uranium

Grade 9: map location of Sydney, Nova Scotia as a mining site, location of largest hydroelectric generation

Grade 12: provinces with largest hydroelectric generating stations

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: source of solar power, oil and gas province

Grade 9: province which has 3/4 of Canada's proven oil and gas reserves, location of Fort McMurray

Grade 12: map location of Fort McMurray, Sydney as mining sites. Province which is the greatest producer of uranium

6.3 Mining	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Iron	57 (1)	22 (1)	--
Lead-Zinc	--	38 (2)	36 (3)
Asbestos	--	56 (2)	24 (1)
Nickel	26 (2)	56 (3)	59 (1)
Copper	48 (1)	57 (1)	--
Gold	32 (1)	62 (1)	69 (1)
Median	35	57	41

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: Canada is the largest producer of nickel

Grade 9: map location of Trail and Schefferville for mining

Grade 12: map location of Trail as a mining site

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: main component of steel

Grade 9: map location of Thetford Mines as a mining site

Grade 12: map location of Yellowknife and Whitehorse as a mining site

6.4 Forest Industry	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Lumber	51 (2)	--	67 (1)
Pulp and Paper	--	32 (3)	34 (1)
Median	51	36	50

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: largest tree in Canada used for lumber

Grade 9: type of manufacturing industry in Hinton

Grade 12: type of manufacturing industry in Hinton

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: major industry in British Columbia

Grade 9: why northern trees are used for pulp and paper rather than lumber

Grade 12: most important dollar earning industry in British Columbia

Table 22 (Cont'd)

6.5 Fishing Industry		Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12	
Atlantic Fisheries	29 (1)	46 (2)	--	
Pacific Fisheries	61 (1)	74 (1)	--	
Median	45	53	--	

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: name of largest and most famous Canadian fishing area

Grade 9: most profitable Maritime fishery

Grade 12: no objective items on fishing

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: most valuable catch of the Pacific fishery

Grade 9: basis of British Columbia's fishing industry

Grade 12: no objective items on fishing

6.6 Manufacturing		Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12	
Location Factors	41 (2)	27 (2)	--	
Location of Manufacturing in Canada	52 (1)	--	--	
Some Selected Canadian Industries	35 (3)	26 (11)	30 (8)	
Median	37	25	24	

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: high electricity requirements in manufacturing aluminum, location of automobile industry, name of gas city

Grade 9: matching Canadian cities with manufacturing industries

Grade 12: industries associated with Cornwall and Kitimat

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: general process of manufacturing, reason for little industry in the Far North

Grade 9: location and use of potash

Grade 12: industries associated with Edmonton

6.7 Recreation and Tourism---there are no objective items at any of the grade levels for Recreation and Tourism

Table 23

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in Geography:
Transportation/Communication

7.1	Land	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
	Roads	56 (2)	85 (1)	--
	Railways	48 (1)	56 (2)	74 (1)
	Highways	--	33 (2)	--
	Pipelines	53 (1)	--	40 (1)
	Median	50	46	57

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: Trans-Canada Highway

Grade 9: Yellowhead Highway, northern terminal of CNR in British Columbia

Grade 12: eastern terminal of the Interprovincial Oil Pipeline

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: why building land transportation was difficult in British Columbia

Grade 9: snowmobiles have replaced dog sleds for the Inuit, names of Canada's transcontinental railway system

Grade 12: importance of railroad on development of agriculture in the west

Table 23 (Cont'd)

7.2	Water	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
	Harbours	37 (2)	13 (1)	--
	Inland Waterways	49 (3)	39 (1)	60 (1)
	Median	43	26	--

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: major west coast grain shipping port

Grade 9: most important year round harbour on the east coast

Grade 12: only one item was administered

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: St. Lawrence Seaway must close because of ice

Grade 9: description of the St. Lawrence Seaway

Grade 12: 60 per cent were able to identify the relationship between water transportation and the shape of farms in southern Quebec

7.3	Air	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
	Major Air Routes	--	65 (1)	--
	Major Airports	--	--	77 (1)
	Civil Aviation	--	32 (2)	--
	Median	--	33	--

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: no objective items for grade 6 level

Grade 9: levels of government in charge of air controllers, name of airline owned by Alberta government

Grade 12: levels of government in charge of air controllers, name of airline owned by Alberta government

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: no objective items for this level

Grade 9: name of airline owned by Federal government

Grade 12: 77 per cent are able to identify reason why Montreal has the heaviest volume of air traffic in Canada

7.4 Communications	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Radio	--	27 (2)	42 (1)
Satellites	48 (1)	15 (1)	20 (1)
Median	--	19	--

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: no objective items for this level

Grade 9: name of the Anik satellite, first type of electronic mass communication available to Canadians

Grade 12: no objective items for this level

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: 48 per cent know that Cambridge Bay North West Territories receives T.V. signals by satellite

Grade 9: name of federal agency controlling radio and T.V. programming in Canada

Grade 12: no objective items for this level

Table 24

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in Geography:
Issues and Problems

8.1	Regionalism	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
	Regional Disparity	--	42 (2)	--
	Regional Development	--	57 (1)	--
	Median	--	56	--

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: no objective items for this level

Grade 9: region with highest unemployment

Grade 12: no objective items for this level

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: no objective items for this level

Grade 9: four cornerstones of Maritime economy

Grade 12: name of Alberta Government's trust fund

8.2 Resource Development	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Renewable and Non-Renewable Resources	--	42 (1)	--
Government Resource Policies	48 (1)	35 (1)	--
Continental Water Policy	--	38 (1)	--
Median	--	38	--

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: no objective items for this level

Grade 9: province with strongest opposition to increase in domestic oil prices

Grade 12: no objective items for this level

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: 48 per cent are able to identify Canada's offshore fishing limit

Grade 9: an example of a non-renewable resource

Grade 12: no objective items for this level

8.3 Ecology, Conservation and Wildlife	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept†	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Ecology	48 (1)	--	--
Pollution	63 (1)	29 (1)	85 (1)
Median	56	--	--

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: pipeline may disturb caribou migration

Grade 9: 29 per cent were able to identify mercury as a type of non-biodegradable pollution

Grade 12: no objective items for this level

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: major industrial threat to the environment

Grade 9: 40 per cent are familiar with issues relative to Canadian resource development

Grade 12: 85 per cent are able to identify acid rain as a form of pollution recently discovered to be depleting fish and decreasing crop production

Chart 8

Geography Written Responses

2.1 LOCATION - Grade 9

Name two Canadian provinces that are landlocked. What special trade problems does a landlocked province have?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	35
One Content Category	8.5
Two Content Categories	18.5
Three Content Categories	29
Four Content Categories	9

Thirty-eight per cent of the students are able to conceive of the trade difficulties inherent in the situation while 49 per cent are able to name both provinces correctly. Points mentioned include distances, costs, lack of access to major markets and geographical barriers. Specifications concerning import and export trade are few, but the general idea is evident.

3.2 CLIMATE - Grade 6

What happens when moist air is cooled quickly?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	25
One Content Category	59.5
Two Content Categories	13.5
Three Content Categories	2

Most students who offer appropriate information in response to this question do so in terms of effects, not by explaining the process involved. Perhaps if the item stem had provided contextual cues in terms of geographical features (e.g., mountain ranges) the students would have elaborated somewhat.

3.2 CLIMATE - Grade 12

Victoria, British Columbia, Lethbridge, Alberta, and Regina, Saskatchewan lie on a similar latitude. In spite of this similarity, why is it that they have different climates?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	25.5
One Content Category	24.5
Two Content Categories	22.5
Three Content Categories	21.5
Four Content Categories	6

There is very little specialized vocabulary employed to explain the differences in climate called for in this item. The evidence suggests that although there is a minimal level of awareness that water, mountains and location affect climate, specific cause and effect relationships are unclear.

Chart 8 (Cont'd)
Geography Written Responses

4.1 NATURAL SOIL REGIONS OF CANADA - Grade 12

"Soil types help to determine economic activity." How does this statement apply to the Prairie provinces?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	20
One Content Category	15.5
Two Content Categories	48
Three Content Categories	6.5
Four Content Categories	1

The answers to this question are so elementary that the scoring guide which included the conventional analysis of soil types, vegetation and climatic zones had to be abandoned. Basically, the pattern of response is: good soil -> good crops -> good economy. Very little attempt is made to offer supporting examples or illustrative details.

4.3 NATURAL VEGETATION REGIONS - Grade 6

What are the Badlands of Alberta?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	55
One Content Category	19
Two Content Categories	16
Three Content Categories	5
Four Content Categories	5

Twenty-one per cent of the students are able to identify the location of the Badlands, 18 per cent know of its' significance with regard to prehistoric fossils and 10 per cent can describe the terrain.

The major misconception is to ignore "Alberta" and treat the topic as "bad land."

5.1 DEMOGRAPHY - Grade 12

Why does the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence Lowlands region have the higher concentration of Canada's population?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	28.5
One Content Category	8
Two Content Categories	23.5
Three Content Categories	28
Four Content Categories	12

Over 70 per cent of the students show a basic understanding of the concepts involved in this item, but do not develop their answers fully.

Chart 8 (Cont'd)

Geography Written Responses

5.2 SETTLEMENT PATTERNS - Grade 12

From 1941 to 1971 the Canadian farm population decreased substantially while the urban population increased considerably. What were the reasons for this phenomenon?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	13
One Content Category	48
Two Content Categories	31
Three Content Categories	7
Four Content Categories	1

Generally speaking, this question is answered well. Students make an effort to elaborate ideas and offer specific details to support their points. A misconception which appears fairly often is a confusion of the time span. Despite the limitations established in the item stem, considerable discussion of the Depression and drought of the thirties appears. Another interesting aspect is a notably pro-farmer tone to these responses.

6.1 AGRICULTURE - Grade 9

Give two reasons why the Prairies are a major wheat producing area.

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	4
One Content Category	5
Two Content Categories	60.5
Three Content Categories	27
Four Content Categories	3.5

Student response to this item is excellent; 91 per cent are able to provide two reasons as called for by the item. Of that number, 30 per cent go on to elaborate their ideas more fully.

6.2 ENERGY SOURCES - Grade 6

What makes oil exploration in Canada's Far North so difficult?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	28
One Content Category	34
Two Content Categories	25.5
Three Content Categories	12
Four Content Categories	.5

The very few multiple-category responses make it quite evident that, other than it being very cold in the North, there is little understanding of the circumstances surrounding oil exploration in such a locale. It is also generally assumed that the major thrust of that activity was well inland.

Chart 8 (Cont'd)
Geography Written Responses

6.2 ENERGY SOURCES - Grade 6

What are three results of water pollution?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	34
One Content Category	5
Two Content Categories	15.5
Three Content Categories	37
Four Content Categories	6
More Than Four Categories	2.5

The major difficulty with this question is a misreading of "results" as causes. Other than that the students respond quite well. Forty-five per cent are able to offer three results of water pollution.

6.3 MINING - Grade 9

Why are mining, lumbering and fishing known as primary industries?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	46.5
One Content Category	42.5
Two Content Categories	11

Although over half of the students provide appropriate material in their answers they do not seem altogether certain about the precise meaning of term "primary." Many answers are incomplete or include partially appropriate statements. There is a tendency to get off topic.

7.2 WATER - Grade 12

What are the reasons for the relative lack of industries in the North?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	24
One Content Category	12
Two Content Categories	34.5
Three Content Categories	15.5
Four Content Categories	14

Although 76 per cent of the students demonstrate a basic understanding of the factors involved in the question, the answers are rather sketchy for this grade level (only 30 per cent of the students employed three or more content categories in their answers). Also, ideas requiring some inference or analysis are poorly developed.

Chart 8 (Cont'd)

Geography Written Responses

7.3 AIR - Grade 6

What were two jobs of the bush pilots?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	38
One Content Category	30
Two Content Categories	28
Three Content Categories	4

Most of the responses are related to the contemporary operations of small aircraft. There are very few references to the historical contributions of the bush pilot in opening up the Canadian North. In other words, the question is interpreted largely in the present tense. Even so, 38 per cent of the students indicate no idea of what a bush pilot might do or be.

8.1 REGIONALISM - Grade 12

What is meant by the diversification of Alberta's economy?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	45
One Content Category	11
Two Content Categories	35.5
Three Content Categories	8.5

The major problem encountered by the students with this item is that they simply do not know what is meant by the term "diversification." Their major efforts are directed towards describing the present features of Alberta's economy with special attention given to non-renewable resources.

8.1 REGIONALISM - Grade 12

Discuss the following statement: "The economic center of gravity has, in part, moved to Western Canada."

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	26
One Content Category	28
Two Content Categories	20
Three Content Categories	4
Four Content Categories	25

There is little discussion of the other western provinces (besides Alberta) or of the West as a whole. Elaborations and exemplars are lacking. Many students exercise the opportunity to express their political and regional opinions, biases, prejudices and emotions.

Chart 8 (Cont'd)
Geography Written Responses

8.1 REGIONALISM - Grade 12

Describe three causes of regional disparity in Canada.

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	44
One Content Category	11
Two Content Categories	17
Three Content Categories	11
Four Content Categories	4
More Than Four Categories	13

The major area of confusion in response to this question is the meaning of "disparity." This term is interpreted as differences in the sense of disagreements. Secondly, "causes" is often read as "examples." There are many remarks of an evaluative nature.

8.2 RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT - Grade 9

What has been the major political dispute between Alberta and Ottawa for most of the last decade?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	56
One Content Category	34.5
Two Content Categories	7
Three Content Categories	2.5

Surprisingly, less than half of the students demonstrated any real knowledge of the political issues(s) called for by this item. Over one-quarter of the students respond in a very abbreviated manner with ownership and control of natural resources (i.e., oil and gas). Very little effort is made to offer elaborations or supporting details.

Table 25

Average Achievements Re: Concepts In History:
Discovery and Exploration of Canada

1.0 Discovery and Exploration In Canada	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Concept			
Norse Voyages	56 (1)	44 (1)	48 (1)
English Voyages to North America	32 (3)	10 (2)	40 (4)
French Voyages to North America	--	15 (1)	51 (1)
Exploration West of the Great Lakes	41 (4)	38 (3)	28 (6)
Northern Exploration	--	14 (1)	9 (1)
Median	38	20	37

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: name of explorer who discovered Alberta

Grade 9: John Cabot's voyages

Grade 12: areas explored by Amundsen and Hearne

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: where Vikings came from

Grade 9: first explorer to cross Canada

Grade 12: Champlain, Vikings, Frobisher and Mackenzie

Table 26

Average Achievements Re: Concepts In History:
Inhabitants and Settlers

2.0 Inhabitants and Settlers	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Concept			
First Canadians	51 (8)	46 (4)	--
Arrival of the French	35 (2)	51 (6)	46 (1)
German Settlers	--	--	29 (2)
United Empire Loyalists	27 (1)	19 (1)	79 (1)
Settlement of the West	44 (11)	39 (15)	38 (10)
Post World War I Migration	26 (1)	41 (1)	44 (1)
Post World War II Migration	--	47 (2)	57 (3)
Median	42	38	40

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: Selkirk Colony, where Indians came from, Indian tribe in the Maritimes

Grade 9: Initiator of Red River settlement, definition of township

Grade 12: location of first school in Alberta; description of Mennonites

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: cultural activities of the Plains Indian

Grade 9: significance of the "last spike," role of fish and furs in early French settlement

Grade 12: most recent immigrants, reason for United Empire Loyalist immigration

Table 27

Average Achievements Re: Concepts In History:
Social and Economic Development

3.0 Social and Economic Development	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Fur Trade of New France	39 (7)	40 (11)	50 (6)
Seigneurial System	40 (2)	40 (4)	--
English Colonies Prior to 1815	24 (1)	53 (1)	69 (1)
Canada (1815-1850)	65 (1)	46 (1)	--
Settlement of the West	33 (2)	523 (6)	41 (4)
Canada's Economic Growth	40 (1)	70 (2)	56 (2)
"Canada's Century"	26 (1)	43 (4)	25 (4)
Prosperous 1920's	--	39 (2)	--
Depression of the 1930's	43 (1)	--	34 (7)
Social Progress	--	25 (3)	48 (3)
Median	36	42	39

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: natural resources which first attracted Europeans to Canada, organization of the seigneurial system

Grade 9: definition of a seigneur, Louisbourg

Grade 12: on-to-Ottawa trek; Influenza epidemic after World War I

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: use of oxen instead of horses

Grade 9: map location of Fort Edmonton, role of trans-continental railway in trade expansion

Grade 12: names of fur trade companies, name of CNR, role of North American colonies in supplying new materials to England

Table 28

Average Achievements Re: Concepts In History:
Political Development

4.0 Political Development	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Government of New France	--	47 (2)	27 (6)
After the Seven Year's War	28 (4)	33 (6)	41 (12)
Rebellions of 1837	30 (2)	39 (4)	22 (7)
Drive and Demand for Responsible Government	--	--	22 (3)
Confederation of Canada	29 (10)	46 (12)	49 (9)
Extending Law and Order West	412 (2)	55 (5)	43 (12)
Achieving Autonomy	--	6 (2)	34 (5)
Bill of Rights (1960)	--	59 (1)	44 (1)
FLQ Crisis (1970)	--	35 (1)	50 (3)
Federal Provincial Confrontation	--	44 (1)	64 (2)
Median	31	44	37

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: year of Confederation, location of Confederation conferences, meaning of Canadian motto

Grade 9: two World War I battles in which Canadians fought, meaning of Canadian motto, Statute of Westminster, naming leaders at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham

Grade 12: Jesuit martyr, meaning of Canadian motto, Company of 100 Associates

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: first Prime Minister of Canada

Grade 9: languages involved in Manitoba Act of 1870, first Prime Minister of Canada, three politicians with the greatest influence on Confederation

Grade 12: first Prime Minister of Canada, constitutional Act of 1791, splitting Canada into Upper and Lower Canada

Table 29

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in History:
Canada in World Affairs

5.0 Canada in World Affairs	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Canadian-United States Relations	--	58 (1)	41 (2)
World War I (1914-1918)	--	19 (1)	28 (3)
Post World War I	--	16 (1)	54 (2)
Post World War II (1939-1945)	33 (2)	35 (3)	42 (6)
Post World War II (1945-present)	58 (2)	34 (5)	28 (1)
Peacekeeping Role	--	45 (1)	39 (3)
Median	41	35	52

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: beach related to D-Day--1944

Grade 9: Dieppe raid, League of Nations

Grade 12: Canadian Prime Minister during Conscription Crisis, World War II cabinet minister in charge of munitions and supply

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: organization for world peace established after World War II

Grade 9: results of Quebec Act, reason Canada entered World War II

Grade 12: Normandy, significance of joining League of Nations, reason for entering World War II

Table 30

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in History:
Themes in Canadian History

6.0 Themes in Canadian History	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Social	76 (1)	66 (2)	73 (2)
Political	56 (2)	--	47 (2)
Economic	--	43 (2)	39 (5)
International	46 (2)	72 (1)	74 (2)
Median	53	49	52

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: name of Heritage Fund

Grade 9: relationship of Homestead Act to western settlement

Grade 12: aims of the CCF party during the depression

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: names of the Prairie provinces

Grade 9: names of the Prairie provinces

Grade 12: names of the Prairie provinces

Table 31

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in History:
Social and Cultural History of Western Canada

7.0 Social and Cultural History of Western Canada	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Women's Rights	--	--	38 (2)
Regional	35 (4)	43 (11)	35 (5)
Median	38	44	34

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: name a 19th Century missionary in Alberta

Grade 9: name a first premier of Alberta, detail of Alberta history, two dominant political parties in recent years

Grade 12: person responsible for establishing British Columbia as a crown colony in 1858, first province to institute government financed hospital care

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: two provinces created in 1905

Grade 9: details of Alberta history, two provinces created in 1905, nickname for Calgary, area known for dinosaur fossils

Grade 12: two provinces created in 1905

Table 32

Average Achievements Re: Concepts in History:

Appendix

8.0	Appendix	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Concept	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
	Social	--	49 (9)	53 (1)
	Organizations and Movements	--	43 (1)	--
	Disasters and Agricultural Hardships	--	54 (1)	--
	People	48 (1)	55 (12)	50 (2)
	Sports	15 (1)	51 (1)	--
	General	46 (9)	36 (15)	49 (7)
	Median	42	44	48

Least Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: Canadian national sport, type of transportation in the west before railroads

Grade 9: Manitoba floral emblem

Grade 12: Alberta location designated as a world Heritage Site by UNESCO

Most Frequently Known Items

Grade 6: Ann Murray, floral emblem of Alberta, two national parks in Alberta

Grade 9: Terry Fox

Grade 12: Candu reactors, Karen Kain, three most recent prime ministers

Chart 9

History Written Responses

2.0 INHABITANTS AND SETTLERS - Grade 6

Why did some prairie pioneers build sod houses?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	17
One Content Category	49
Two Content Categories	27
Three Content Categories	7

Eighty-three per cent of the students are able to provide at least one appropriate response to this question. The answers are expressed on a very concrete, practical level with specific details.

This item shows the abilities of this age group to perform effectively when they understand the vocabulary and the knowledge called for in the question.

2.0 INHABITANTS AND SETTLERS - Grade 6

Describe three survival skills that the Indians taught the new settlers in early Canada.

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	25
One Content Category	17
Two Content Categories	28
Three Content Categories	27
Four Content Categories	3

Thirty per cent of the students are able to provide three (or more) appropriate responses as requested by the item.

A few misconceptions appear. A number of students think that the Indians taught the white man how to ride horses, fight, build log cabins, and plough.

2.0 INHABITANTS AND SETTLERS - Grade 9

Describe three survival skills that the Indians taught the new settlers in early Canada.

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	10
One Content Category	29
Two Content Categories	48.5
Three Content Categories	2
Four Content Categories	3
More Than Four Categories	7.5

There are very few inappropriate responses to this item. Exceptions include many contributions of the Native peoples to white society which could not be considered survival skills.

The responses concentrate on the basic food, shelter and clothing requirements for survival in an unfamiliar wilderness. Tools, medicine, means of conveyance and communication are less frequently mentioned.

The students demonstrate an adequate awareness concerning this topic.

Chart 9 (Cont'd)

History Written Responses

2.0 INHABITANTS AND SETTLERS - Grade 9

How was the Indian way of life changed by European fur trade and settlement?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	18
One Content Category	37
Two Content Categories	29
Three Content Categories	16

Student responses concentrate heavily on the loss of land and restriction to reserves. The second major content area discussed is the loss of traditional skills and customs. The impact of disease, alcohol and missionaries on traditional values is also mentioned. These students demonstrate a positive bias toward the plight of the Indian and a basic understanding of how such conditions came about.

2.0 INHABITANTS AND SETTLERS - Grade 12

Identify the significant effect on the Indian way of life brought about by early contact with European civilization.

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	23
One Content Category	16
Two Content Categories	17
Three Content Categories	44

Although over three-quarters of the students respond to this item, the quality of the answers in terms of variety of content, supporting examples and depth of analysis is disappointing for this grade level. Many of the answers are highly evaluative in tone (very pro-Indian), but not argued well.

2.0 INHABITANTS AND SETTLERS - Grade 12

What were the three major components of the National Policy of 1879?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	90
One Content Category	7
Two Content Categories	3

The students have no knowledge of the National Policy of 1879. Their misconceptions include: constitutional development; civil rights; establishing peace, i.e., treaties with French, Indians, other countries; Confederation; division of powers in the BNA Act.

There is a notable "I don't know and I don't care" attitude exhibited by a significant number of students. It is interesting that grade 12 students can be so highly opinionated about East/West rivalries and know so little about an important element of the historical backdrop.

Chart 9 (Cont'd)

History Written Responses

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 6

What are three ways in which the Canadian Pacific Railroad helped the development of Western Canada?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	13
One Content Category	25
Two Content Categories	36
Three Content Categories	26

Although there is a large proportion of students who respond to this question, many of the answers are quite superficial.

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 6

What was Rupert's Land?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	79
One Content Category	21

The students do not recognize the name "Rupert's Land" although they are able to describe, to some extent, the area and land use.

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 6

What effects did the fur trade have on exploration in Canada?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	75
One Content Category	24
Two Content Categories	1

Many students interpret the question as: "What were the effects of the fur trade?". Consequently, students discuss the impact on the Indians and wildlife. Secondly, there is confusion about the appropriate time frame, students often assuming that "the fur trade" is a contemporary enterprise. Of those students who attempt to answer the question as posed, a common misconception is that "explorers could not explore because there were too many fur traders around." In other words, they do not link the two processes in any significant manner.

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 6

What does the term "Dirty Thirties" mean?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	54
One Content Category	24
Two Content Categories	15.5
Three Content Categories	6.5

Over 60 per cent of the students have little or no knowledge of what the term "Dirty Thirties" signifies. Only six per cent can give an accurate description along with some discussion of the personal, social, economic or political ramifications of the period. Drought, dust and poor crops tend to be most frequently mentioned. There are many inappropriate answers, such as: being 30 years old, being unclean (physically), the Wars, immoralities and cultural characteristics of the 20's or 30's.

Chart 9 (Cont'd)

History Written Responses

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 9

What are three of the main purposes of labour unions?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	16
One Content Category	14
Two Content Categories	24
Three Content Categories	38
Four Content Categories	7
More Than Four Categories	1

Forty-six per cent of the students are able to provide three (or more) content categories as called for by the item. However, there is a tendency to offer "activities" of unions rather than frame the answers in terms of "purposes."

"To go on strike" is a very common notion which is not always associated with the idea of collective bargaining. Students also employ the concept of the "group over the individual" frequently.

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 9

What effect did the fur trade have on settlement in Canada?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	32
One Content Category	41
Two Content Categories	24
Three Content Categories	3

Sixty-eight per cent of the students are well aware that the potential wealth to be gained in the fur trade was an impetus to immigration. Also, many students are cognizant that the pattern of settlement followed the trade routes and built up around trading posts. However, very little mention is made of the involvement of the chartered companies in initiating and establishing permanent settlements.

Chart 9 (Cont'd)
History Written Responses

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 9

What effects did the fur trade have on exploration in Canada?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	37
One Content Category	42
Two Content Categories	16
Three Content Categories	5

Many students talk about the trappers/traders having to move farther west in search of fur-bearing animals and/or that the trading companies funded such expeditions. However, these answers are very vague and often do not consider the whole question. There is a tendency to split the question into either the "fur trade" or "explorers" without developing appropriate cause and effect relationships.

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 9

What does the term "Dirty Thirties" mean?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	22
One Content Category	26
Two Content Categories	19
Three Content Categories	25
Four Content Categories	8

Fifty-two per cent of the grade 9 students are able to refer to two or more of the major categories describing the "Dirty Thirties," as well as to add one or more of the personal, social, political or economic effects of the period. Misconceptions are that this was a time characterized by world war, immorality, and/or violent crime.

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 9

What was Rupert's Land?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	71
One Content Category	19
Two Content Categories	5.5
Three Content Categories	4.5

Miscellaneous descriptions are numerous and for the most part inappropriate. The concept of time is not well understood.

Chart 9 (Cont'd)

History Written Responses

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 12

What were the main features and purposes of the seigneurial system?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	75
One Content Category	10
Two Content Categories	4
Three Content Categories	7
Four Content Categories	2
More Than Four Categories	2

This item strongly differentiates between those who know something and those who do not. The 25 per cent of the students responding appropriately have a definite understanding of the seigneurial system despite the lack of supportive detail.

Many of those who respond inappropriately admit (perhaps resentfully) that they have not studied early Canadian history for some time and could not remember that material.

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 12

What effects did the fur trade have on exploration in Canada?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	20
One Content Category	49
Two Content Categories	28
Three Content Categories	3

Most students demonstrate a basic understanding of the relationships involved in this item, but do not fully elaborate their answers. Understanding of chronology is weak and there is a tendency to discuss "settlement" rather than "exploration."

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 12

What does the term "Dirty Thirties" mean?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	7
One Content Category	5
Two Content Categories	33.5
Three Content Categories	30.5
Four Content Categories	24

Approximately 88 per cent of the grade 12 students are able to make worthwhile, but not interrelated, statements describing the "Dirty Thirties." The three major facets (time period, Depression, and climate/environment) are well understood and a wide variety of amplifications are mentioned. There are very few misconceptions--the major one being that World War II is a part of this time period. Some students speculate about parallels to present conditions and moralize about the future.

Chart 9 (Cont'd)

History Written Responses

3.0 SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Grade 12

What was Rupert's Land?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	71
One Content Category	16
Two Content Categories	10
Four Content Categories	3

Response to this question is very poor. Of the 29 per cent of the students who offer some appropriate content, many answers are vague, incomplete, and/or partially appropriate. Also, many answers include flippant, facetious comments.

4.0 POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT - Grade 12

What were Lord Durham's two main recommendations following the 1837 Rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	66
One Content Category	22
Two Content Categories	12

Only 12 per cent of the students are able to provide mention of two main recommendations of the Durham Report. Among the misconceptions demonstrated are the following: Lord Durham was an explorer, the intendant, the initiator of the BNA Act, an official of a trading company, the "peacemaker" of a (not specified) rebellion.

7.0 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF WESTERN CANADA - Grade 9

In recent years many people have moved to Alberta from other parts of Canada. Give at least three reasons for this movement.

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	3
Two Content Categories	22
Three Content Categories	40
Four Content Categories	22
More Than Four Categories	13

This item is handled very well by the students. Only 3 per cent do not respond and 22 per cent give fewer than the three reasons required. Natural resources, more jobs/better pay and "a nice place to live" seem to be the most prevalent reasons. Lower taxes and long-range opportunities are also mentioned often. There are some misconceptions concerning prices, housing and the cost of living.

Chart 9 (Cont'd)
History Written Responses

8.0 APPENDIX - Grade 6

What is the purpose of Remembrance Day?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	13
One Content Category	61
Three Content Categories	26

Almost 90 per cent of the students show a considerable awareness about Remembrance Day. They provide many descriptive comments concerning the nature of the observances. This is, by far, the best answered question at this grade level.

8.0 APPENDIX - Grade 9

What is the significance of the Victoria Cross?

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	69
One Content Category	17
Two Content Categories	11
Three Content Categories	3

Seven out of 10 students do not know the answer to this question. Of the 31 per cent of the students who respond with something appropriate to the item there are very few complete answers. Most papers include considerable superfluous (often inaccurate) detail. It is possible that these students are engaging in guess work or that they are confused by the wording of the question, i.e., the choice of the word "significance."

It is interesting to contrast the level of difficulty on this item with the one on Remembrance Day for grade 6.

8.0 APPENDIX - Grade 9

List two services which the bush pilots provided to Northern Canadian development.

Description of Student Responses	Per Cent of Students
Nil Or Inappropriate Response	22
One Content Category	28
Two Content Categories	42.5
Three Content Categories	6.5
Four Content Categories	1

Fifty per cent of the students were able to provide a complete response to this item (at least two content categories). Additional contemporary services, such as crop dusting and military surveillance are slightly off topic, but demonstrate knowledge of the uses of small aircraft. On the other hand, few students emphasize the role of the bush pilot in Northern Canadian development.

A P P E N D I X 2

All Level (Multi-Grade) Results For Objective
Test Items Common To Grades 6, 9 and 12.
Average Results For All Level Items

All Level (Multi-Grade) Responses for Citizenship

Table 33 presents information on the multilevel items (that is, common items presented to students at all three grade levels) for Citizenship. Table 34 contains the actual item stems classified by content module. For each item stem, the percentage of students responding correctly for each grade is given. The type of question (multiple choice, completion, or matching) is also identified.

The table was examined in order to determine what trends occurred across grades.

The response rates for the majority of items in three modules (Basic Terms and Concepts, Principles of Representative Government, and Adequacy of the Canadian Political Systems) generally show large improvements from grade 6 to grade 9 to grade 12. In the Canadian Parliamentary System module only half the items show much improvement with grade. In the Provincial Legislative System module response rates for most items show very little change from grade to grade, except for the items on the number of seats in the legislature and the name of the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. The improvement from grade 9 to grade 12 tends to be greater than the improvement from grade 6 to grade 12 on the items in the Basic Terms and Concepts module.

Specific items which show little change from grade to grade include: naming the Governor-General, identifying the function of the legislative branch of government, the number of seats in the House of Commons, matching names with federal Cabinet ministers, and naming the premiers of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island.

The table below provides summary findings which permit comparisons among grades.

Table 33

Citizenship All-Level (Multi-Grade) Averages: Percentages of Students
Answering Common Items Correctly According to Content Module

Content Modules	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
1.0 The Canadian Political System			
1.1 Basic Terms and Concepts	33	46	63
1.2 Principles of Representative Democracy	52	66	84
1.4 Canadian Parliamentary System	22	33	44
1.5 Provincial Legislative System (Structure)	20	23	29
2.0 Knowledge of Public Affairs			
2.1 Adequacy of the Canadian Political Systems (name the political leaders)	13	28	41

Table 34

Canadian Citizenship: Response Rates
for Multilevel Items

Content Module and Item Stem	Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
1.0 The Canadian Political System			
1.1 Basic Terms and Concepts			
Democracy:			
* Representative democracy is a system of government in which the people	43	59	79
† A system of government in which people exercise power directly or through elected representatives	8	31	61

* Multiple Choice † Completion § Matching

Table 34 (Cont'd)

Content Module and Item Stem	Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Federal System:			
* A federal system of government is one which has	28	30	49
† What are the three levels of government in Canada	32	49	68
Constitutions:			
* The written part of the Canadian constitution is the	22	38	70
* The person who is appointed to represent Queen Elizabeth II in Canada is	41	56	82
Constitutional Monarchy:			
* The Queen's representative to a province is the	33	50	76
* A country that is governed by a monarch whose power is limited by law is	34	46	73
* Canada's Governor-General is	57	69	67
Parliamentary Government:			
* The combination of the House of Commons, Senate, and Governor-General is the	57	74	87
Functions of Government:			
* The branch of the Canadian Government which has the power to make laws is the	54	60	61
* That part of the federal government which carries out and enforces the laws is the	13	18	24
* The branch of government which interprets the law is called the	27	38	59
§ Matching branches of government with function:			
Judicial branch	25	38	59
Executive branch	27	28	41
Legislative branch	31	44	54
1.2 Principles of Representative Democracy			
Political Parties:			
* The leader of the federal Progressive Conservative party is	62	80	91
* The leader of the federal Liberal party is	73	83	93
* The political party that presently governs Canada is	73	77	91
* The political party which is in power in Alberta is the	38	66	86
* The political party that has sought Quebec's separation from the rest of Canada is called the	56	79	93
Periodic Elections:			
* Provincial and federal elections must always occur within	25	37	58
Representation by Population:			
* An area represented by a member of Parliament is called a	35	41	73
1.4 Canadian Parliamentary System			
Governor-General:			
† The Queen's representative in Canada is	20	45	73
* The number of seats in the House of Commons at present is	26	22	25
* In the Canadian parliamentary system, the official Opposition is	38	62	87
* The official record of everything that is said in the House of Commons is called the	15	15	27
Cabinet:			
* The people selected by the prime minister to carry on the business of government are called the	46	74	86
§ Matching position with name of person currently holding it (federal):			

* Multiple Choice † Completion § Matching

Table 34 (Cont'd)

Content Module and Item Stem	Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Minister of Defense	9	13	20
Minister of Agriculture	13	24	42
Minister of External Affairs	18	21	21
Minister of Energy	18	28	31
Minister of Finance	14	26	27
1.5 Provincial Legislative System (Structure)			
Lieutenant-Governor:			
* The Governor-General and lieutenant-governor are appointed for terms of	26	28	36
* The lieutenant-governor of Alberta is	12	20	23
Legislative Assembly:			
* The number of seats in the Alberta Legislative Assembly is	30	35	48
Cabinet:			
† Matching position with name of person currently holding it (provincial):			
Minister of Education	20	21	28
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources	18	31	37
Minister of Agriculture	17	15	19
Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs	16	14	20
Provincial Treasurer	17	18	19
2.0 Knowledge of Main Public Affairs in Canada			
2.1 Adequacy of the Canadian Political System			
Federal-Provincial Relations:			
* The leader of the Parti Quebecois is	54	77	89
Political Leadership:			
† Name the premier of each Canadian province:			
British Columbia	7	24	60
Alberta	57	81	95
Saskatchewan	5	22	49
Manitoba	3	10	26
Ontario	5	17	38
Quebec	8	59	73
New Brunswick	1	5	8
Nova Scotia	1	2	3
Prince Edward Island	1	2	3
Newfoundland	2	5	11
Mean (Averages)	27	39	52

* Multiple Choice † Completion § Matching

All-Level (Multi-Grade) Results in Geography (Tables 35, 36)

The response rates for the majority of items in three modules (Location, Size and Shape of Canada; Location, Size and Shape of Alberta; and Physical Elements), as in Citizenship show large improvements from grade 6 to grade 9 to grade 12. One-half the items in the Population and Settlement module show large improvements with each grade. This improvement is generally greater from grade 6 to grade 9, than from grade 9 to grade 12. Improvement from grade 6 to grade 9 is greater than from grade 9 to grade 12 on items relating to the map locations of Canadian and Albertan rivers. Note the possible ceiling effect for grade 12 students on Canadian boundaries items (1.3).

Specific items which show little change from grade to grade include map locations of: Hudson Bay, the Pacific Ocean; Mackenzie, South Saskatchewan, Peace and Athabasca Rivers; Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and Lake Huron; and the cities of Edmonton, Yellowknife, Winnipeg, Quebec, and Charlottetown; and the geographic area of Canada with the largest area.

The table below provides a summary overview of the development of knowledge levels across the grades.

Table 35

Geography All-Level (Multi-Grade) Averages: Percentages of Students Answering Common Items Correctly According to Content Module

Content Modules	Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
1.0 Location, Size and Shape of Canada			
1.3 Boundaries	76	86	90
2.0 Location, Size and Shape of Alberta			
2.1 Location	58	58	68
2.2 Size	57	71	79
2.3 Boundaries - Natural	41	46	46
3.0 Physical Elements			
3.1 Structure and Relief	33	44	54
3.2 Climate	52	76	85
5.0 Population and Settlement			
5.1 Demography	49	55	60
5.2 Settlement Patterns	71	81	87

Table 36

Canadian Geography: Response Rates for Multilevel Items

Content Module and Item Stem	Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
1.0 Location, Size and Shape of Canada			
1.3 Boundaries			
Natural:			
§ Matching names of ocean with map location:			
Pacific Ocean	79	81	88
Arctic Ocean	82	90	94
Atlantic Ocean	67	78	86
Hudson Bay	88	95	96
James Bay	79	92	91
Gulf of St. Lawrence	75	90	92

* Multiple Choice † Completion § Matching

Table 36 (Cont'd)

		Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Content Module and Item Stem		Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
Political:				
* The longest undefended border in the world is shaped by		65	77	83
2.0 Location, Size and Shape of Alberta				
2.1 Location				
Relative Position in Canada:				
* Most of Alberta is located in the		58	58	68
2.2 Size				
Effects of Size on:				
§ Match Alberta land form region with map location:				
Canadian Shield		40	54	64
Alberta Plains		55	71	85
Foothills		65	79	88
Rocky Mountains		81	90	94
Northern Alberta Uplands		45	60	66
2.3 Boundaries				
Natural:				
† Most of Alberta is in the landform region called the		41	46	46
3.0 Physical Elements				
3.1 Structure and Relief				
Natural Drainage and Water Supply:				
§ Matching name of river with map location:				
St. Lawrence River		62	75	82
Mackenzie River		37	40	53
Fraser River		27	36	53
Saskatchewan River		51	63	72
Ottawa River		58	64	76
Columbia River		27	34	47
Saguenay River		28	33	53
Churchill River		30	34	49
Athabasca River		28	42	59
§ Matching name of lake with map location:				
Lake Michigan		33	52	65
Lake Erie		22	33	34
Lake Ontario		23	30	30
Lake Superior		29	44	54
Lake Huron		18	26	31
Lake Athabasca		36	62	64
Great Bear Lake		38	51	62
Lake Winnipeg		50	80	86
Great Slave Lake		32	51	57
§ Matching name of river with map location:				
South Saskatchewan River		28	35	42
North Saskatchewan River		25	34	56
Bow River		23	33	45
Peace River		23	24	25
Athabasca River		32	36	39
Red Deer River		25	28	45
Oldman River		37	47	60
Physiographic (Landform) Regions:				
* The most highly populated region of Canada is the		33	47	65
* The geographic region of Canada with the largest area is the		48	53	63
3.2 Climate				
Climate Controls:				
† The warm west wind which brings a sudden rise in temperature in winter in southern Alberta is the		52	76	85

* Multiple Choice † Completion § Matching

Table 36 (Cont'd)

Content Module and Item Stem	Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
5.0 Population and Settlement			
5.1 Demography			
Distribution:			
* Most of Canada's population lives within 100 miles of the	49	55	60
5.2 Settlement Patterns			
Urban (Intensive Ecumene):			
§ Matching city name with map location:			
Toronto	80	89	96
Edmonton	95	97	100
Halifax	60	77	83
Yellowknife	63	64	72
St. John's	56	76	81
Winnipeg	76	88	93
Quebec City	62	72	67
Whitehorse	81	88	94
Charlottetown	65	69	79
Regina	79	91	94
Fredericton	63	69	79
Victoria	75	90	94
Mean (Averages)	51	61	69

* Multiple Choice † Completion § Matching

All Level (Multi-Grade) Results in History

The response rates for the majority of items show large improvements from grade 6 to grade 9 and from grade 9 to grade 12, with the exception of items in the Discovery and Exploration of Canada. Within the Political Development module items on the Rebellions of 1837 showed little significant change across grades. For three modules (Themes in Canadian History, Social and Cultural History, and Appendix), as well as for questions on Confederation within the Political Development module, the improvement from grade 6 to grade 9 tended to be larger than the improvement from grade 9 to grade 12.

Specific items which showed little change across grades include: the explorer who discovered Alberta, the first explorer to cross Canada, the Canadian hero at the Battle of Queenston Heights, the leaders of the 1837 rebellion, the meaning of the Canadian motto, the reason Canada entered World War II, and the reason for the beginning of Alberta's prosperous era in 1947.

The summary table below provides comparisons of the growth in knowledge about Canadian history over time.

Table 37

History All-Level (Multi-Grade) Averages: Percentages of Students
Answering Common Items Correctly According to Content Module

		Average Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Content Modules		Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
1.0	Discovery and Exploration of Canada			
1.4	Exploration West of the Great Lakes	37	37	32
2.0	Inhabitants and Settlers			
2.6	Settlement of the West	16	25	40
4.0	Political Development			
4.2	After the Seven Year's War	31	40	49
4.3	Rebellions of 1837	30	36	28
4.5	Confederation of Canada	29	41	54
5.0	Canada in World Affairs			
5.6	World War II (1939-1945)	33	46	61
6.0	Themes in Canadian History			
6.1	Social	76	91	94
6.4	International	53	72	88
7.0	Social and Cultural History of Canada			
7.1	Regional	49	64	71
8.0	General and Miscellaneous	38	50	60

Table 38

Canadian History: Response Rates
for Multilevel Items

		Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
Content Module and Item Stem		Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
1.0	Discovery and Exploration of Canada			
1.4	Exploration West of the Great Lakes			
	* The European explorer who discovered what is now known as Alberta was	25	25	21

* Multiple Choice † Completion § Matching

Table 38 (Cont'd)

Content Module and Item Stem	Percent of Students Responding Correctly		
	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 12
* The first explorer to cross Canada from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean was	49	49	43
2.0 Inhabitants and Settlers			
2.6 Settlement of the West			
* The first permanent European Settlement in Western Canada was	16	25	40
4.0 Political Development			
4.2 After the Seven Year's War			
* At the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, the French troops were led by	32	37	50
* At the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, the British troops were led by General	42	57	69
* The Canadian hero at the Battle of Queenston Heights during the War of 1812 was	18	25	29
4.3 Rebellions of 1837			
* The leader of the Rebellion of 1837 in Lower Canada	17	29	24
* The leader of the Rebellion of 1837 in Upper Canada was	43	43	31
4.5 Confederation of Canada			
* Confederation was the direct result of three conferences held at	12	21	32
* The provinces which were created by Confederation in 1867 were	27	45	54
* The first prime minister of Canada was	72	81	88
† Canada's first prime minister was	31	67	68
† The four provinces created by Confederation in 1867 were	30	44	54
† A motto chosen for the Dominion of Canada at the time of Confederation reads, "A mari usque ad mare." The meaning of this Latin phrase is	11	5	12
† The written portion of Canada's constitution is the	18	27	68
5.0 Canada in World Affairs			
5.6 World War II (1939-1945)			
* Canada entered World War II in 1939 because	44	54	60
* On D-Day, June 6, 1944, Canadian troops landed on the beaches of	22	39	61
6.0 Themes in Canadian History			
6.1 Social			
† The three Prairie provinces of Canada are	76	91	94
6.4 International			
† The world's longest undefended border lies between which two countries	53	72	88
7.0 Social and Cultural History of Canada			
7.3 Regional			
* The two provinces which were created in 1905 were	49	64	71
8.0 Appendix			
8.7 General			
* The prosperous oil era for the province of Alberta began in 1947 with the discovery of	31	31	41
* Karen Kain achieved international fame in	36	58	69
† Name the three people who served as the last three prime ministers of Canada	47	60	71
Mean (Averages)	35	46	54

* Multiple Choice † Completion § Matching

A P P E N D I X 3

Written Response Items: Summary and Conclusions

WRITTEN RESPONSE ITEMS: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Citizenship

Grade 6

Items producing the most effective responses:

"Give two ways in which the growth of Canadian cities affect farm production."

"Why are oil, coal and gas called non-renewable resources?"

Items producing the least effective responses:

"What is the difference between an MLA and an MP?"

"What is Alberta's Heritage Trust Fund and how is it used?"

It is perhaps noteworthy that one of the questions receiving the best answers in this grade is an all level item, and both of the poorest answered questions are also all level items.

Grade 9

Items producing the most effective responses:

"What are three rights guaranteed to status Indians by the Canadian Government?"

"Why are oil, coal and gas called non-renewable resources?"

Items producing the least effective responses:

"What is the difference between an MLA and an MP?"

"What is Alberta's Heritage Trust Fund and how is it used?"

Again it can be noted that one of the questions eliciting the best answer at this grade is an all level item and both of the poorest answers are in response to all level items. They are, in fact, the same items as in grade 6.

Grade 12

Items producing the most effective responses:

"What are three of the requirements for Canadian citizenship?"

"Why are oil, coal and gas called non-renewable resources?"

Items producing the least effective responses:

"What are some of the controversies surrounding the Canadian Senate?"

"In our parliamentary system, what is a private member's bill?"

One of the best answered questions is an all level item. This coincides with the results in grades 6 and 9. (See all level response item comparison charts.)

There are six written response items in citizenship at the grade 6 level, four at grade 9 and eight at grade 12. The content modules receiving the best responses overall are: Resource Use and Conservation, Multiculturalism in a Bilingual Canada, and Basic Terms and Concepts. The modules eliciting the poorest responses overall are: Practices of Representative Government, Economic Conditions, and the Canadian Parliamentary System.

Geography

Grade 6

Items receiving the most effective responses:

"What happens when moist air is cooled quickly?"

"What are three results of water pollution?"

Items receiving the least effective responses:

"What are the Badlands of Alberta?"

"What were two jobs of the bush pilots?"

Grade 9

Item receiving the most effective response:

"Give two reasons why the Prairies are a major wheat producing area."

Items receiving the least effective responses:

"What has been the major political dispute between Alberta and Ottawa for most of the last decade?"

"Why are mining, lumbering, and fishing known as primary industries?"

Grade 12

Item receiving the most effective response:

"From 1941 to 1971 the Canadian farm population decreased substantially while the urban population increased considerably. What were the reasons for this phenomenon?"

Items receiving the least effective responses:

"What is meant by the diversification of Alberta's economy?"

"Describe three causes of regional disparity in Canada."

There are five written response items in geography in grade 6, four in grade 9 and eight in grade 12. The content modules eliciting the best answers overall are: Climate, Energy Sources, Agriculture, and Settlement Patterns. The modules which are responded to least effectively are: Air, Natural Vegetation Regions, Mining, Resource Development, and Regionalism. It should be noted that in grade nine and grade twelve there is only one item respectively which can be considered effectively answered. The other items (not cited) receive a mediocre level of response.

History

Grade 6

Items eliciting the most effective responses:

"Why did some prairie pioneers build sod houses?"

"What is the purpose of Remembrance Day?"

Items eliciting the least effective responses:

"What was Rupert's Land?"

"What effects did the fur trade have on exploration in Canada?"

It is interesting to note that both the items which received the poorest responses are all level items.

Grade 9

Items eliciting the most effective responses:

"Describe three survival skills that the Indians taught the new settlers in early Canada."

"In recent years many people have moved to Alberta from other parts of Canada. Give at least three reasons for this movement."

Items eliciting the least effective responses:

"What was Rupert's Land?"

"What is the significance of the Victoria Cross?"

One of the items receiving the poorest response is the same all level question appearing at grade 6.

Grade 12

Items eliciting the most effective responses:

"What does the term 'Dirty Thirties' mean?"

"Identify the significant effects on the Indian way of life brought about by early contact with European civilization."

Items eliciting the least effective response:

"What were the three major components of the National Policy of 1879?"

"What were the main features and purposes of the seigneurial system?"

One of the best answered questions here is an all level item.

(For further information on the all level items see the comparison charts.)

There are seven history written response items in grade 6, ten in grade 9 and seven in grade 12. The content modules which are answered best are: Inhabitants and Settlers, Social and Cultural History of Western Canada, Socio-Economic Development, and the Addendum to history topics. The modules receiving the poorest responses are: Socio-Economic Development, Inhabitants and Settlers, and the Addendum. Therefore, no clear cut pattern of the quality of responses emerges for history in terms of the content modules.

There are several general remarks which can be made about the written responses:

1. At all grade levels and for the majority of items there are a few students who offer exceptionally good answers---complete and well-reasoned (approximately 1 per cent to 3 per cent). These papers stand in marked contrast to the bulk of the responses which could be described as poor to minimally adequate.

2. Students at all three grade levels and in all three content areas exhibit a tendency to have difficulty: staying on topic, i.e., responding to the questions as posed; using knowledge of specifics to support their generalizations; employing specialized vocabulary; and developing patterns of relationships over time and space.

3. There is also a tendency throughout to offer unsolicited interpretive and evaluative statements. These range from flippant or facetious comments; political, economic and social opinions; moral judgements; to speculations about future trends and conditions. Unfortunately, these responses are no better argued or supported than the content based generalizations. It may also be interesting to note that such observations are most frequent at the grade 12 level.

4. Students respond better in terms of both quality and quantity of content to those topics and issues which are contemporary, proximate, dealt with in the present program of studies, or newsworthy.

5. The format of student responses exemplifies the various stages of cognitive development of students at 11, 14 and 18 years of age. This is particularly noticeable in the grade 6 answers where a narrative, associational mode is prevalent. Grade 9 and 12 students (especially grade 12) use many more generalizations in their reasoning.

